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EDITORIAL

The challenge of the present World War II to contemporary Mennonitism has made Mennonite leaders eager to levy on the experiences of the church in past wars as an aid in meeting current needs. A comprehensive war history of Mennonites had been planned by the Peace Problems Committee of the Mennonite Church before the present war broke out, but could not be carried through in time. Meanwhile Guy F. Hershberger has prepared under the auspices of the committee a valuable treatment of the entire field of the theory and practice of nonresistance by Mennonites which will shortly be published under the title *War, Peace, and Nonresistance.* The brief discussion on "Mennonites in the Civil War" appearing in this issue is taken from one of the historical chapters in this book.

Ira D. Landis, the historian of the Lancaster County Pa. Mennonites, gives us another of his interesting biographies of Lancaster County bishops in this issue. This time it is one of the ablest late eighteenth century leaders of Pennsylvania Mennonitism, Christian Burkholder. The extensive quotations from early letters, and from the excellent book by Bishop Burkholder (*Conversation on Saving Faith*), which has become a part of the heritage of modern Mennonitism, make this biography doubly valuable.

Robert Friedmann completes his study of the devotional literature of European Mennonitism with his article on the literature of the Mennonites in Danzig and adjacent East Prussia. As in the previous articles, the inner life and piety of the East Prussian Mennonites is displayed through the medium of their literature. It is clear that the pietistic influence so marked in South Germany and Switzerland, while present, was not so significant in East Prussia. Noteworthy is the fact that the Elbing catechism of 1787 became one of the most widely used catechisms in all of Mennonite history, serving both Amish and Mennonites of Middle and South Germany, as well as their descendants in North America. Only a common faith could have made this possible. The Dutch-North German branch of Mennonitism thus gave the Swiss-South German branch not only Menno Simons and Dirk Philips, but also a catechism and prayer collections.

The Anabaptist novelettes of Stern and Riehl, leading German writers of the middle of the nineteenth century, are the most satisfactory of all literary treatments of Anabaptist themes, as is brought out in Elizabeth Horsch Bender's critique. Lack of access to European sources has made it impossible to be certain of the cause of the interest of these authors in Anabaptism as well as of the exact source of their material, but it is most interesting to note the close connection of Riehl with C. A. Cornelius at the University of Munich, and it is altogether possible that the authoritative writings of Cornelius on the Münsterites also influenced Stern.

The series of studies on the extinct Mennonite churches in Ohio by John Umble continues with the exhaustive study on the Seneca County Mennonites in this issue. Little but genealogical data and settlement records remain to give a slight insight into the fortunes of this long forgotten congregation, but that little has been recovered through Professor Umble's painstaking research.

The Mennonite Quarterly Review

Vol. XVIII No. 3

MENNONITES IN THE CIVIL WAR

GUY F. HERSHBERGER

I. THE NORTH

The first experience of the American people with actual conscription came during the Civil War. Interestingly enough, since it was a civil war, there were two nations for the time being, and two systems of national conscription. Both in the North and in the South, however, the draft was slow in getting under way and at no time was it an absolute draft, since it was always possible, at least theoretically, to secure exemption through the hiring of a substitute. Compared with the Civil War, conscription in the second World War is a streamlined affair, indeed.

The war in the North began with a call for 75,000 state militia volunteers. Not until July 17, 1862, was the Federal Militia Act passed authorizing a draft of the militia between the ages of eighteen and forty-five years. A few weeks later, under the provisions of this act the President issued an order for the drafting and enrollment of 300,000 men. Since this was a militia act, however, it provided that the actual draft and enrollment was to be under state administration and control unless a given state should for any reason be unable to function. Neither this act nor the President's order made any reference to conscientious objectors as such. The

latter, however, provided for the exemption of "all persons exempted by the laws of the respective states from military duty."[1]

This meant that the treatment of conscientious objectors would be in the hands of the states. It was natural, then, that Mennonites, Quakers, and other peace groups should approach their respective state governments for a clarification of their status. Many of the states had provisions in their constitutions for the exemption of conscientious objectors. The Indiana constitution, for example, provided that "no person conscientiously opposed to bearing arms, shall be compelled to do militia duty; but such person shall pay an equivalent for exemption, the amount to be prescribed by law."[2] But no law had ever been enacted fixing the amount of this payment. Therefore, upon the recommendation of Governor Morton, the assistant adjutant-general fixed this commutation fee at $200 per man.[3] Practically the same thing occurred in Ohio, although the Iowa legislature passed a law which made no mention of conscientious objectors, but which provided for exemption from the draft of anyone who would pay a commutation fee of $300 or who would provide a substitute. The governor of Ohio indicated in a letter to Secretary of War Stanton that the proceeds of the commutation fees paid in that state would be used to hire substitutes and to care for sick and wounded soldiers.[4]

In March, 1863, Congress took the administration of conscription out of the hands of the states by passing an "Act for Enrolling and Calling out the National Forces." This law, which included as eligible for the draft all able-bodied men between the ages of twenty and forty-five, made no mention of conscientious objectors. It did, however, provide two methods by which anyone might be exempted from the draft: 1. By furnishing an acceptable substitute. 2. By paying $300 "for the procuration of such substitute." This sum was fixed as the uniform rate, thus ending the confusion of varying state rates.[5] Among the conscientious objectors, however, there was considerable objection to this act, since the only way of securing exemption was to hire a substitute, either directly or indirectly. And it did not seem consistent to hire another man to do that which one could not conscientiously do himself.

[1] E. N. Wright, *Conscientious Objectors in the Civil War* (Phila., 1931), 51.
[2] Art. 12, Sec. 6.
[3] E. N. Wright, *op cit.*, 53.
[4] *Ibid.*, 52, 53.
[5] *Ibid.*, 64, 65.

Due to this opposition, no doubt, the new draft act passed on February 24, 1864, contained a section dealing specifically with conscientious objectors. This was the first federal draft act to recognize conscientious objectors as such. It provided that persons with religious scruples against warfare should be considered as noncombatants, and specified three alternatives to military service: 1. Assignment to duty in hospitals for the care of sick and wounded soldiers. 2. Assignment to duty in the care of the freedmen. 3. Payment of a commutation fee of $300 to be applied to the benefit of sick and wounded soldiers.[6] It seems that in carrying out the provisions of this law only the third alternative was actually used. At any rate, an editorial in the *Herald of Truth,* less than four months before the close of the war, says that up to that time all Mennonite conscientious objectors had been directed to pay the commutation fee. None had been asked to serve in hospitals.[7]

During the Civil War the official position of the Mennonite Church in America on war and military service remained true to its historic tradition. This is clear from the few records of conference proceedings which have come down from this period. Moreover, in the spring of 1863 the Mennonites as well as the other peace churches began to petition the government to give consideration to their nonresistant faith. The Mennonites of Pennsylvania also had considerable influence with Thaddeus Stevens, congressman from Lancaster, who supported the provision for the exemption of conscientious objectors in the law of February, 1864. Although the Quakers were much more active in presenting their case to the government during the Civil War than were the Mennonites, the latter nevertheless played an important part in this task.[8]

On the other hand, it seems quite clear that the Mennonite Church was less effective in its teaching program than it had been in the eighteenth century and in the time of the American Revolution. The period prior to the Civil War was a period of spiritual decline in the Mennonite Church. There is little doubt that the ministers taught nonresistance in their regular preaching. And it is known that the church assisted its members in securing exemption when drafted. On the other hand almost nothing seems to have been done by way of special teaching through peace literature and simi-

6 *Ibid.,* 82, 83. C. H. Smith, *The Mennonites of America* (Goshen, Ind., 1909), 377.
7 "A Serious Consideration," *Herald of Truth,* (Chicago, Jan., 1865), 2:6, 7.
8 C. H. Smith, *Mennonites of America,* 376-382.

lar means before the third year of the war. In the eighteenth century the church was awake to the need of such teaching. The 1742 edition of the *Ausbund* was published with this in view. In 1748 a new edition of the *Martyr's Mirror* was published because "the flames of war appeared to mount higher," and this was six years before the war actually came to Pennsylvania. But in the nineteenth century the church was so inert that the Civil War had continued for more than two years before any literature on the subject of peace was produced at all.

This lack of preparation seems to have borne some rather undesirable fruit. One writer says: "The actual record made during the Civil War by the young men from Mennonite homes and communities in reference to the nonresistant faith was not everywhere very good. To judge from the records, many men from Mennonite and Amish homes must have entered the ranks of the Union armies."[9] Perhaps a number of factors were responsible for this condition, especially in the churches west of the Allegheny Mountains. For two generations Mennonite families had been moving westward. Many of them lived in small communities widely separated from other Mennonite communities. Poor transportation facilities made it difficult for congregations to keep in touch with each other and build each other up in the faith. In these frontier communities so much time was devoted to the clearing of the forests, and to building new homes, that the more important spiritual interests were frequently neglected. Before the Civil War there were almost no Sunday schools. Young people's meetings, young people's institutes, Christian life conferences, winter and summer Bible schools, Bible conferences, Mennonite academies and colleges, and other agencies considered important today, did not exist at all. All of the religious services were in the German language. The young people from Mennonite homes as a rule did not even unite with the church until after they had married.

As a result of these circumstances many of the young men who were drafted were not prepared for the experience. They had not been adequately taught. Many of those who had not become members of the church were carried along with the tide and entered the army. Some of them united with the church later, after returning from the war. But many were permanently lost to the church

[9] Edward Yoder, "Teaching Nonresistance," *Gospel Herald* (Scottdale, Pa., April 18, 1940), 33:78.

through this experience. Perhaps this same lack of teaching was also responsible for the fact that some Mennonites sought exemption from military service by the hiring of substitutes. In the law of 1863 this plan, or the payment of a commutation fee for the procuration of a substitute, was the only means of exemption provided. Under the law of 1864 the hiring of substitutes was still possible for anyone desiring exemption, although as noted above, conscientious objectors could secure exemption through a commutation fee, the proceeds of which were used for the care of sick and wounded soldiers.

If this failure on the part of the church was the result of a lack of teaching in the period before the war it was also the occasion for a revival of teaching in the period following the war, and a cause for a great awakening in the Mennonite Church. In June, 1863, appeared two little booklets on nonresistance, "the first trickles of a stream of literature that has flowed into the church in growing volume since." One was entitled, *Warfare. Its Evils, Our Duty.*[10] It was written by John F. Funk, a young man born in 1835 of Mennonite parents in Pennsylvania, who was converted in the winter of 1857-58 in a Presbyterian revival meeting in Chicago, and united with the Mennonite Church two years later. This booklet appeared when Funk was twenty-eight years old. Before he reached his twenty-ninth birthday young Funk had also founded the *Herald of Truth,*[11] which from the beginning became the unofficial organ of the Mennonite Church, and a major source of its vitality for many years to come. All this was done by a young man under thirty who had not yet been ordained to the ministry. The other booklet published in 1863 was entitled *Christianity and War* and was written by John M. Brenneman, a progressive bishop of Allen County, Ohio, who saw the possibilities in young Funk and ordained him to preach in 1865, at a time when the majority of the ministry, perhaps, had no vision of the need of revival, of new literature, of a church paper, or of new and aggressive methods for the teaching of nonresistance.

10 John F. Funk, *Warfare. Its Evils, Our Duty* (Chicago and Markham, Ont., 1863).

11 This was the first pediodical published for the Mennonite Church. In 1852, however, John H. Oberholtzer had founded the first Mennonite paper in America, the *Religioeser Botschafter,* which served the group which seceded from the Franconia Conference of the Mennonite Church in eastern Pennsylvania in 1847. Today this group comprises the Eastern District Conference of the General Conference of the Mennonite Church of North America.

This story helps to dramatize not only the decline of the church in the period before the war, but also the manner in which God can raise up men as instruments for the transformation of a failing church into a triumphant one. It is stimulating to see how the young editor of the *Herald of Truth* promoted the cause of nonresistance in his new paper. The very first issue contained an announcement of Brenneman's pamphlet, *Christianity and War.* During 1864 and 1865 there were editorials and articles, both original and selected, on the subject of nonresistance, and this emphasis continued long after the close of the war.

In an editorial in the January, 1865, issue of the *Herald,* Funk discussed various alternatives to military service and evaluated them as to their consistency. He presented a convincing case against the hiring of substitutes. "It is now generally admitted to be wrong," he says, "and there is probably scarcely a single one who professes to hold to the doctrine of nonresistance, that would be willing to send a man to do that which he himself . . . considers altogether against the gospel of Jesus Christ."[12] This editorial brings out the interesting point that townships or other local units of government sometimes formed organizations to raise sufficient substitute money to exempt the entire unit from the draft. Funk warns his readers against the inconsistency of nonresistant people joining in with this practice. The August, 1864, issue of the *Herald of Truth* has an article extracted from a pamphlet, published earlier that same year, by Daniel Musser of the Reformed Mennonite Church.[13] This extract also argues effectively against the hiring of substitutes, as does an article by a contributor from Indiana in the issue of March, 1865.[14] From this evidence it is clear that the leadership of the church during the Civil War was definitely opposed to the hiring of substitutes as a method of securing exemption from the draft.

It is interesting to note, however, that both Funk and Musser approved the payment of the commutation fee on the ground that it was a tax. Musser argues that the money belongs to the government, and the government has a right to claim that which is its own. Furthermore, the Scriptures command the payment of taxes. Funk says: "In paying the communtation fee, we give to the government what it demands of us in the same manner as we pay our

[12] "A Serious Consideration," *Herald of Truth* (Jan., 1865). 2:6.
[13] D. Musser, *Nonresistance Asserted* (Lancaster, Pa., 1864).
[14] "Preventing the Draft," *Herald of Truth* (March, 1865), 2:21.

taxes, which is our Christian duty."[15] Although Funk held that the use which is made of the tax proceeds is the responsibility of the government rather than that of the taxpayer, he nevertheless stressed the idea that when the money is used for the aid of sick and wounded soldiers as provided in the draft act of 1864 it is being used for a good purpose.

Another alternative provided by the draft act was personal service in the care of sick and wounded soldiers. Funk approved this service in two of his editorials,[16] but from the available evidence it is not clear exactly what he meant by this approval. The draft law itself did not state where, or in what way, conscientious objectors might give this service. And apparently the Department of War did not do so either. In January, 1865, Funk said that so far the Secretary of War had in all cases directed the payment of the commutation fee. No one had been required to serve in hospitals. This was only a few months before the close of the war, so the problem of personal service probably never came up. The fact is, however, that sick and wounded soldiers of the Civil War were cared for by the medical bureau of the army and by the United States Sanitary Commission. The latter was an agency recognized by the Department of War and related to it in much the same way that the Red Cross is related to the army medical corps in wartime today. So at first thought it would seem that Funk was giving his approval to the equivalent of present-day service in the medical corps of the army.

On the other hand, since the problem never came up in actual practice, it is possible that Funk was simply referring to the general principle of giving relief to the sick and suffering without having thought through the possible relation of the individual to the military organization in this service. At any rate it has been the official position of the Mennonite Church during the two recent world wars that, in order to be consistent, the relief work of nonresistant Christians must be performed through organizations detached from the military. To perform such work as a part of the military organization is simply to be a part of an organization whose task it is to wage war. This nonresistant Christians cannot do. While Funk was far ahead of his people in his understanding of the problems of his time, his thinking on this point is nevertheless somewhat im-

15 *Herald of Truth* (Jan., 1865), 2:6, 7.
16 *Ibid.*, (August, -864), 1:50; (Jan., 1865), 2:6, 7.

mature. This is perhaps due in part to the fact that the church did not actually have to face the problem of hospital service. It may also be a reflection of the spiritual immaturity of the church at that time.

It is interesting to note that many Quakers were dissatisfied with the draft law of 1864 and objected just as seriously to the payment of the commutation fee as they did to the hiring of a substitute. Their reason, however, was one which Mennonites could hardly share. They thought of the commutation fee, or any form of alternative service, as a penalty imposed for obeying their conscience, and they did not think they should be penalized for obeying God rather than men.[17] The Mennonite attitude would be that any service which in itself is right should be performed, if the government requires it, even though it be required as an alternative to war. The Mennonites showed a weakness during the Civil War, however, in not being alert to grapple adequately, on the basis of their own principles, with the issues at hand. If they had been more alert they would have had a clearer idea of what their nonresistant faith required of them. And if they had had greater clarity of vision it seems likely that the government would have responded to their convictions.

The federal authorities took a very considerate attitude toward the problem of the conscientious objector. At the close of the war Secretary of War Stanton said he and President Lincoln had "felt that unless we recognized conscientious religious scruples, we could not expect the blessing of Heaven."[18] This statement is verified by the fact that in the administration of the draft Stanton went farther than Congress had gone in giving consideration to conscientious objectors. When he discovered that many Quakers were opposed to payment of the commutation fee he issued an order to army officials to parole all such objectors from the army "until called for."[19] *The Friend,* a Quaker periodical, expressed the opinion that if all Quakers had stood firmly for this position none would have been required to pay even the commutation fee.[20] It seems certain, therefore, that if the Mennonites had been sufficiently advanced in their thinking to conceive and promote a comprehensive

[17] E. N. Wright, *op. cit.,* 83, 84.
[18] *Ibid.,* 129.
[19] *Ibid.,* 86.
[20] *Ibid.,* 87.

program of civilian alternative service, in complete harmony with their nonresistant principles, it would have been granted them. As it was, the record of the Mennonite Church in the Civil War was not as satisfactory as might be desired.

II. THE SOUTH

In the Southern Confederacy, as in the North, the regulation of the draft was in the hands of the states in the early period of the war. In April, 1862, however, this authority was taken over by the Confederate government. The law making this change provided that any drafted man could secure exemption by hiring a substitute, but there was no specific provision for conscientious objectors as such.[21] In October, 1862, however, due to the influence of the peace churches, a law was enacted making specific reference to conscientious objectors and providing two methods for their exemption: 1. By furnishing a substitute. 2. By paying a tax of $500 into the public treasury.[22]

It seems that the Mennonites and Dunkers were satisfied with the law, but the North Carolina Yearly Meeting of Friends objected to the commutation tax since it is a "price exacted of us for religious liberty."[23] It is also interesting to note that before the regulation was taken out of state hands a proposal was made that conscientious objectors in North Carolina labor in the state salt works as a form of alternative service. But the Quakers objected to this also, apparently for the same reason.[24] It will be recalled that the northern Quakers also objected to the commutation fee for this reason. These are illustrations of a difference between the Quakers and the Mennonites in their basic attitude toward conscription. Mennonites do not like conscription, but their chief objection is to the purpose for which conscription is imposed rather than to conscription itself. They acquiesce to alternative civilian service, whereas some Quaker pacifists are more inclined to object to conscription as such. For this reason the Mennonites probably would have offered no objection to the idea of working in the salt mines.

The only Mennonite group of any size in the South during the Civil War was that living in the Shenandoah Valley, in Virginia,

21 *Ibid.*, 100.
22 *Ibid.*, 104-5.
23 *Ibid.*, 107, 108.
24 *Ibid.*, 100.

the scene of Sheridan's raid, which took place in October, 1864. They were therefore unfortunate enough to live directly in the area of battle. For this reason, and also because of the desperate straits of the Confederate government toward the close of the war, the Mennonites of Virginia suffered many more hardships than did those of the North. Furthermore, the Southern conscription laws were more stringent from the very beginning than were those of the North. When Virginia called out the militia in 1861, there was no provision for the exemption of conscientious objectors. Therefore anyone who failed to respond, either personally or by hiring a substitute, was liable to arrest. Under this test a few of the younger Mennonites weakened and joined the ranks with the volunteers. Some hid themselves in the mountains, however, and came home to visit their families from time to time at night. Others when drafted went into the army under protest, with the understanding among themselves that they would not shoot.

This no-shooting pledge was carried out by a sufficient number of Mennonites and Dunkers to cause General T. F. (Stonewall) Jackson to say: "There lives a people in the Valley of Virginia, that are not hard to bring to the army. While there they are obedient to their officers. Nor is it difficult to have them take aim, but it is impossible to get them to take correct aim. I, therefore, think it better to leave them at their homes that they may produce supplies for the army."[25] In the meantime some of these men were taken out of the front ranks and detailed "as cooks, teamsters and on the relief corps, to attend to the sick and wounded."[26] An interesting case of this type is that of John A. Showalter who, after suffering considerable persecution and a court-martial for refusing to drill, finally consented to cook for the company.[27]

In the spring of 1862 a new call was made for men, and again some of the younger Mennonites went into the ranks, while others went into hiding in the mountains. Bishop Samuel Coffman took a firm stand for the principle of nonresistance in all his preaching, with the result that some threats were made against him. When these became too strong he left home, remaining in Maryland and Pennsylvania for a time, until the feeling against him had subsided

[25] *Ibid.*, 167.

[26] L. J. Heatwole in Hartzler and Kauffman, *Mennonite Church History,* (Scottdale, Pa., 1905), 208.

[27] E. N. Wright, op. cit., 170.

somewhat. In the same spring of 1862 two groups of about ninety Mennonites and Dunkers liable for military service made an effort to leave Virginia, planning to go to West Virginia and Ohio as refugees for the duration of the war. They were captured, however, and eighteen of them were taken to Harrisonburg, while the remaining seventy were taken to the Libby prison at Richmond.

Here they were examined by Sydney S. Baxter of the Confederate War Department, who found them sincere conscientious objectors with no desire to aid the enemy. Baxter reported later that some had tried to hire substitutes, that one man had sent in his money for this purpose, and that others had helped the families of volunteers. Some had furnished horses for the army and would be willing to give up their property if it were asked. Baxter said he understood a law would soon be passed exempting these people upon payment of a commutation fee. Since all were willing to pay, he recommended their release.[28] The following October the Confederate Congress enacted the law exempting the conscientious objectors upon the hiring of a substitute or paying a tax of $500. This law led to the release not only of the men in prison, but also to the return of "such who were in the army and such as were in hiding near their homes."[29] It is also important to observe that the Virginia Mennonites came to the assistance of the imprisoned men and those in the army, helping them to raise the commutation money and to pay the price to the authorities to secure their release.[30]

From the fall of 1862 to the spring of 1864 the Mennonites in Virginia were relatively undisturbed by the war except that the army continually requisitioned and hauled away, often without consent or pay, many wagon loads of wheat, corn, and other supplies. In the summer and fall of 1864, however, the provisions of the conscription law with respect to conscientious objectors were interpreted more and more narrowly and the administration of the law became increasingly rigid, until it looked as if all the privileges of the law of 1862 would be lost. As a result, many of the Virginia Mennonites who were liable for the draft made their escape across the mountains into the Northern territory. L. J. Heatwole says that September and October of the year 1864 are "remembered as the time when the Sunday congregations were composed of a few

[28] *Ibid.*, 168-9.
[29] L. J. Heatwole, *loc. cit.*, 210, 211.
[30] *Ibid.*, 211.

old men, the younger boys and the women." He adds that sometimes the Sunday meetings "were seriously disturbed and even stampeded by the real or imaginary approach of soldiers, and at times for a period indefinite no meetings were held by reason of soldiers being quartered on the grounds and occupying the meeting-house where our people were accustomed to meet for worship."[31]

October, 1864, was also the time of Sheridan's raid. Heatwole says that from the evening of the sixth to the morning of the eighth of October, "nearly all the barns and mills, and in some cases, the dwelling houses also, were set on fire in that part of Rockingham County where the Mennonites were located. These buildings were burned, together with their stores and provisions, and the live stock driven from the farms—the whole country being over-run by troops of both sides, keeping up a desultory warfare between them—with the fences obliterated in a way that left their farms a desolate waste."[32] One result of the raid was to increase the exodus from the region, many Mennonite families leaving the valley with transportation provided by Sheridan's army. One family, traveling with its own team and wagon which had not been confiscated, had the experience of having guerrillas fire through the wagon covers without anyone being hurt. An article in the *Herald of Truth* for November, 1864, reports that four Virginia families had recently come to Mahoning County, Ohio, "others had reached their friends and acquaintances at other places, many were still on the way and daily expected to arrive. They will be scattered over almost every portion of the northern states and it is to be hoped that all will be received in the most hospitable manner."[33]

Those who remained in Virginia naturally suffered many hardships. Heatwole says: "There was perhaps never a time before this that Mennonites in America had things more 'in common' than during the war period of 1864-65. Every possible article of wearing apparel had to be manufactured at home—no leather to make shoes, except that which was tanned at home; no hats were worn except the homemade article; no sugar or salt or pepper or spices to season food with; no coffee, except such as was made from parched wheat or rye. Upon the whole, it was like going back to the purely primi-

[31] *Ibid.*, 212.

[32] *Ibid.*, 212-13.

[33] *Herald of Truth* (Nov., 1864). 1:71.

tive life of the grandfathers of a hundred years before."[34] During all this time those Mennonites who were in hiding to escape impressment into the army were in constant danger. Some of them were hunted by army scouts who had orders to shoot them at sight. One is reported to have walked backwards up the mountain through the snow to throw the scouts off the track. He finally reached West Virginia, where he introduced the Mennonite principles to that region, this being the beginning of Mennonite mission work in West Virginia.[35]

Some of these men in hiding had "camping places far up in the mountains, and returned occasionally to their homes for supplies. Others had hiding places under their dwelling houses that were reached by means of trap-doors covered with carpets or bedding to throw the searching party off the trail, and several instances are recalled when the fugitive brother lay with only the thickness of a board and a carpet between himself and his would-be captors."[36] One man was located in his own home by soldiers who surrounded his house at night and informed him that they had orders to shoot him. The captive asked for time to write his will, which was granted. However, as this man wrote his will and awoke his wife and children to bid them farewell, the soldiers were so impressed that they went away leaving the man and his family unharmed.[37]

The Virginia Mennonites, being located in the South and in the very heart of a battle area, found their nonresistance more severely tested than that of any other part of the church. Considering this fact, and also the period in the history of the church in which they lived, their record during this time of trial was fairly satisfactory. It is true that some of their younger men succumbed to pressure and accepted military service. But this was never condoned by the church, and Heatwole cites the case of at least one such young man who was restored to fellowship through public confession.[38] The record of the Virginia church, despite its severe trials, seems to have been better than that of many of the churches west of the Allegheny Mountains. This was no doubt due in part to the fact that it was an older and more established settlement. But more important, per-

[34] L. J. Heatwole, *loc. cit.*, 213.
[35] *Ibid.*, 214, 215.
[36] *Ibid.*, 209.
[37] *Ibid.*, 213, 214.
[38] E. N. Wright, *op. cit.*, 206.

haps, was the vigorous leadership of Bishop Samuel Coffman, who stood out courageously for the Mennonite faith at the risk of his own life, in a time when weaker men might have lost heart. On the other hand, the payment of the commutation fee, the hiring of substitutes, and the acceptance of service as cooks and teamsters in the army are evidence that the Mennonite Church in the South was no more mature than the church in the North in its thinking on the question of alternative service. The intellectual and spiritual immaturity of the church in the Civil War period was universal; no part of the church escaped its influence.

BISHOP CHRISTIAN BURKHOLDER OF GROFFDALE
1746-1809

Ira D. Landis

From Langnau and Ruderswyl in the beautiful but blood-thirsting Emmenthal, Canton Berne, Switzerland, came the Burkholders of America.[1] Among the first bearers of this name to appear in the archives of the past was a certain Hans Burkholder who in 1658 lived in Schneisingen, ten miles northwest of Zurich, and who escaped from arrest on November 26 of that year by fleeing on foot.[2] In 1672 Hans was living at Griesheim at the age of sixty-five, with his wife, aged fifty-five, and seven children aged seventeen to twenty-five.[3] In 1669 he and Christian Gingerich fled a Berne jail.[4] Another Burkholder by the name of Adam, the ancestor of some now living in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, and in Georgia, with his wife aged sixty, and five children aged thirteen to twenty-six, was exiled to Mannheim in October, 1671. Michael Burkholder of Maettenburg, whose wife had been a Mennonite for forty years, would no longer attend the Reformed Church, although their son Jacob could do so without any objection. He, an aged shoemaker, and his wife were exiled from Langnau in 1671. Though apprehended in Berne territory they were excused from payment of a fine because of old age.[5]

The most outstanding Burkholder was Bishop Hans, who died in 1752 after serving his church for forty-seven years. His early home was at Langnau where he reared his family, which included preacher Christian, the father of the subject of this sketch. About 1731 he fled with most of his family to Gerolsheim in the Palatinate.[6]

1 Joseph C. Burkholder, *Report of the First Burkholder Family Reunion,* Harrisburg, 1926, p. 13.

2 Ernst Müller, *Die Geschichte der Bernischen Täufer,* Frauenfeld, 1895, p. 191.

3 *Ibid.,* p. 191.

4 *Ibid.,* p. 146.

5 *Burkholder Reunion Report* I, p. 13.

6 By January, 1732, a congregation of forty families with Hans and Christian Burkholder as ministers was found at Gerolsheim, two hours south of Worms on the Dirmstein and Offenheim Swamps. *Mennonite Quarterly Review,* January, 1940, p. 34. Copied from Müller in *Mennonite Quarterly Review, Ibid.,* p. 10, is reference to Hans Borcholter, aged 65, wife aged 55, and seven children aged 17-25. The above Hans may be one of the children, for Bishop Hans died in 1752.

Numerous letters written by Bishop Hans in the trying years of the 1740's have been preserved, which constitute valuable historical documents. The most important of these are herewith quoted in English translation to indicate the character of the man and his times.[7]

Gerolsheim, January 4, 1744.

Bartholomew von Levering, together with other fellow ministers of the Taufgesinden in Amsterdam:

Very dear and worthy friend and brother in Christ Jesus, we cannot well omit giving you word, Your Honors, about our sorrowful condition and of how we have been this past summer. So you must know that the French oppressed us with many and great burdens, compelling us to give supplies which we can scarcely furnish. To comfort us we are told that everything will be paid for, but we have not yet received a single stiver (Silver coin). And besides we have been burdened with so much compulsory service, that it is no longer possible to bear it. If one comes home at night, one must go away again in the morning. Besides this, the English have also come, and for four long weeks remained only two hours distant from us with a great army so that we again had to do compulsory service that could no longer be endured. After this the army broke camp and went to Weyer. Then we had the headquarters of the Austrians twice among us, so that Your Honors can well see how things have gone with us, and that we passed this summer in great cares and under unbearable burdens.[8]

Now dear friend, these troubles have come to an end, but the great God has visited us with another punishment, a contagious disease, and death has come among the horned cattle so that many thousands of them have fallen and many of our brethren have not a single one left so that poverty is very great among the friends and many know not how to help themselves. Besides the lordly oppressions are very great and no remission is to be hoped for.

Now dearest Friend, we must make known to your Honors yet another gloomy situation. On the death of our most gracious Elector and Lord, we have, as at all times is proper, made application in a strong moving petition, to the present reigning illustrious Elector, regarding the confirmation of our Confession. So far we have received no answer and have also little hope that we shall receive a favorable one, for a command has gone forth from the high government of all bailiwicks regarding the burial of our dead that they shall

[7] The letters were translated by Harry Rohrer for H. Frank Eshleman in the latter's *Historic Background and Annals of the Swiss and German Pioneer Settlers of Southeastern Pennsylvania, and of their remote Ancestors, from the Middle of the Dark Ages down to the Time of the Revolutionary War,* Lancaster, 1917, pp. 289-291, from copies of the originals in the library of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia. Reproductions offered here are taken from the Eshleman book as follows: the letters of Jan. 4, Feb. 17, and March 6, 1744 from pages 289-291; the undated extract from pp. 294-5; the letter of March 16, 1747, from pp. 198-9. The letters of Christian Burkholder are taken from the following pages: April 4, 1752, from pp. 312-3; Nov. 20, 1753, from p. 314.

[8] The War of the Austrian Succession (1740-1748) found the Mennonites of the Palatinate in one of the chief battlegrounds of Europe, with England, Holland, and Austria matched against France, Bavaria, Spain, and Frederick the Great.

no longer be buried in the churchyards which seems to us very hard and burdensome. I have myself spoken about it to several gentlemen of the Government who said to me that we must have patience and first see what protection we receive from our gracious Elector. I have been myself to five of the most eminent ministers and have also spoken with them. They gave good answers but as yet we know nothing about how the matters will end.

We beg, dearest friend, Your Honors will in this give us good counsel how the matter may best be brought to a conclusion, for we are so embarrassed in the matter. It almost looks as if they would drive us out of the land. The great God will have pity on us. So much for desired news of us and we hope for an agreeable answer from you, Your Honors.

Wherewith I close for the present and remain with friendly greeting and recommendation to the divine protection. Your Honors' affectionate friend and brother in Christ Jesus. In the name of the other fellow ministers of our Mennoniite congregations I have written this. Adieu.

Hans Burkholder

Gerolsheim, February 17, 1744

Johannes Deknatel:

Dear and Worthy Friend and brother in Christ Jesus, may you be blessed. Dear and worthy friend and brother, Your Excellency's agreeable letter of the 23rd of January has been duly received, wherein we perceive with love that you also have received our letter of January, the which we are pleased to know. We have also seen by your Honor's letter that you are sorry for our afflicted condition, but at this time can give us no advice regarding our letters of protection. You should be informed that so far we have as yet received no answer to our letter and request, which surprises us, for we were given favorable information by word of mouth. Also we as yet know nothing, dear and worthy friend, of how it will go with us. We have to give so many promises to the eminent that we do not know well how to fulfill them, since we have suffered so much damage from the war and the death of our horned cattle, and besides, had to advance a large sum of money, so that we do not know how to help ourselves. The poverty is so great here in the land, and yet no understanding or sympathy is to be expected that we do not know what to do.

Dear friend and brother, it is the wish and intention of some of our friends to travel to Pennsylvania.[9] We cannot very well advise them against it since we dwell so uncertainly ourselves and do not yet know how we shall be sustained. But we do not wish to trouble and burden your Excellency in the matter. We hope that they may be able to cross and so not trouble Your Excellency in the matter, but we should like very much your opinion and advice, if indeed you would advise us to go there. Dear and worthy friend, we have judged from your letter that you would like further information as to where there is poverty and need on account of the cattle. They might each one try to help himself as much as possible, so we advise that we do not wish to trouble you, aside from three or four families that cannot help them-

[9] The period before and after the War, especially when England and Spain, the great sea powers, were engaged, were periods of greatest immigration to America, thus 1744-1748 was a low-ebbed period. Cf. C. Henry Smith, *Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania*, Norristown, 1929, pp. 234f.

selves. If your Honor seem inclined to help them according to your pleasure and as you deem proper, it will be very kind and agreeable. So far for desired news.

Dear friend, I am growing old and feeble and travelling grows tiresome to me. When, however, we have anything to do for the Lord and Master, the other ministers always think I should take the lead. Because I am an old man and have a white head, they think my words are worth more than theirs, which I have also discovered myself, but my sight and hearing are failing fast.

Your Honor, you are however by me most cordially greeted and committed to God's care, with which we close for the present and remain with friendly greeting and recommendation to the protection of God.

Your affectionate brothers in Christ,
Hans Burkholder, Christian Stauffer, Jacob Hirschler.

Gerolsheim, March 6, 1744

Johannes Deknatel:

Very worthy and in Christ beloved friend and brother. May your Excellency be blessed here in time and hereafter in the blessed eternity; a friendly and brotherly greeting in the Lord, Amen.

Worthy friend, the cause of this writiing to you, your Honor, is this, that some of our friends are thinking about going to Pennsylvania, as I informed you in a former letter, and we have found from the newspapers and otherwise, that it is very unsafe on the ocean on account of the pirates and not very promising for the journey. We desire in the most cordial and friendly manner to beg your opinion and advice regarding the journey and whether you approve of it, and whether it is safe to start or not. If your Honor does not approve, the friends will stay here. They have sold their things and prepared themselves for the journey, but will not further trouble your Excellency than to know the safety of the sea. Please dearest friend, be not displeased that I write you, and write me at once, your Excellency, your advice and opinion that we may govern ourselves accordingly.

Concerning the letter of protection, we have yet no news. I have been myself a short time ago at Mannheim and have myself spoken to the president. He has given me very good news; all shall go well. So much for desired news. I await a speedy answer from your Excellency, with which I close at present and remain with cordial greeting and commending you to the divine protectiion. Your Honor's affectionate friend and Brother in Christ Jesus.

Hans Burkholder.

Gerolsheim, 1745

Bartholemew von Levering and other Taufgesinden in Amsterdam:

[After the usual religious greeting he says:] I cannot refrain from writing to you as I wrote February 22, 1742. I do not know whether you received the same. [He then enumerates how he gave money received to the most needy of the Mennonite brethren in the congregation with names of the amounts received. He also states that he heard early in 1742 that some of the

brethren of the Palatinate near Heilbrun were going to Pennsylvania. The pastor of the congregation, Hendrick Kendig, so informed him. He also reported that these folk had to depend upon their good friends in Pennsylvania for their passage money. Burkholder does not approve of this. Then he continues:]

I have word from the minister of the so-called Amish congregation of Friesland, that some of his people are determined to go to Pennsylvania too. I asked him if they had the money. He said they had and also had letters from Holland which told them to come and they would see that they landed safely. This seems strange to me because your friends in Holland encourage them and discourage us. These people (Amish) make no common cause with us; they do not associate with us when they are in trouble. They try to bring us into disrepute. They belong to the better classes. They consider themselves the best and finest people. They are very prominent. So far as I am concerned I will not ridicule anyone but they ridicule us.

Conditions are very hard among us here in the Palatinate. Our young men cannot be received as congregation men by the authorities here. To get a letter of protection we pay 50 florins ($25). This is double what others pay for safe conduct. We cannot endure this much longer. We have no civil protection. Besides this the oppression of the local magistrates is already too great, and the taxes provided by the Court too heavy. We cannot provide them, let alone the bounty for our young men to escape the army service.

I have tried to help others in my household; but I must give up housekeeping and seek protection for myself elsewhere. I must get rid of my burdens because my bodily powers are failing me as I am getting old and because my sight and hearng is failing me. I must be relieved of all burdens for I cannot hold out. Wishing you God's grace etc. etc.

Hans Burkholder.

Gerolsheim, March 16, 1747

Johannes Deknatel:

Much beloved and worthy friend and brother in Jesus Christ, together with the other fellow ministers of our congregatiion in Amsterdam. May your Honor be blessed now in time and hereafter in a blessed eternity, Amen.

Very dearest friend, I cannot in Christian love refrain from once more making known to you our hard condition regarding the marriage of our children and the burial of our dead. We are not permitted to bury them in certain places without great expense. But we do not wish to make too much of this as we desire to attend to our own burials when it can be done elsewhere; so make no more of this. But concerning the marriage of our children this is very trying to us that no one will accept any from a common or middle class family as they do not wish to increase the number of poor grave lots.

When, however, the parents have died or the housekeeping has been broken up (as I also have done myself) a boy can be brought into the house only with great labor and expense. For a certificate must be secured from the mayor, and other officers with which one enters on the office and duties of a father. And then the subordinate officer directs one to the superior

official, who directs the person to the high electoral government, which sends him to the exchequer and the clergyman of the church, who must pass judgment upon it, and so all the time he has his hand in his pocket, and it is a quarter of a year before he can come to an end, and it costs much money as well as labor before it is finished. Now if your honor will give us good advice about this matter, we will be very glad. Among those who cannot help themselves the poverty is very great. If things cannot be changed, we fear a falling off in the congregation among our young people. God will however cause all this to work for good and graciously assist us.

As concerns myself, I grow from time to time more decrepit and infirm in my body with tremblings and weakness, and my calling and services become more and more a burden, and yet at Easter I administered to five congregations the Holy Communion, and had to travel three or four hours, which is very fatiguing to me. I hope with Paul soon to lay down this tabernacle and to obtain a better, which I greatly desire. If Your Honor is not fully opposed to me as hereinbefore seen, I hope Your Honor will pity me, and grant me graciously your Christian support and contribution, as you deem proper, and be to me a cordial friend in my old days. I hope the great God will again richly recompense you for all. Wherewith I close for the present and remain with friendly greeting and recommendation to God's protection. Your affectionate friend and brother in Christ Jesus,

Hans Burkholder.

Beloved and worthy friend, I have just learned with astonishment, that some of our friends from the upper Palatinate wish in these dangerous times to set out on a journey to Pennsylvania. If your Honor would only give us advice as to what is to be done under the circumstances about this journey, we would thank you. I await an early answer. Adieu.

Hans Burkholder.

In such a furnace of iron (Deut. 4:20) Christian Burkholder, the subject of this sketch, first opened his eyes on June 1, 1746, in the home of a farmer near Gerolsheim in the Palatinate, Southwest Germany. Father Christian, like grandfather Hans, was also a minister serving the congregation at that place. The War of the Austrian Succession then raging (1740-48), in which all of central and western Europe was involved, affected these simple folk very decidedly as the preceding letters of grandfather Hans reveal. Even though they had a partial respite from war's ravages until the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), yet so severe were the physical and spiritual hardships that many turned their eyes westward across the Atlantic in their search for a Canaan.

These hardships are pictured in the letters of Christian Burkholder, senior, which have been preserved:—

Gerolsheim, April 4, 1752

Johannes Deknatel:

[After a religious introduction:] I want news of Nova Scotia in England, etc., for this year many of our families want to take the journey to America for they are promised much freedom there. I want your advice whether our members shall go or not. Concerning the journey to Pennsylvania, this year, there are many of those who would like to go but lack the opportunity. They want to go and I feel that we must allow and assist them to go. I hope Your Honors will not object nor make difficult the journey. Unless they are supported by a certificate from me, under my hand, I do not advise you to encourage them. That is as much assistance as I can expect of you. Do not be displeased with my frequent entreaty. I send my cordial thanks for your condescension toward our people and hope the Lord will reward you.

If your Lordship will allow a little aid, there are six children in our congregation of whom three are under age, very young. Three can earn their bread. They all need money for support. There is nothing left of their parents' property by the time the debts and expenses, which their oppressors have put upon them, are paid. We leave it to you; but any money Your Honors give for these purposes will be well spent.

Christian Burkholder.[10]

Gerolsheim, November 20, 1753.

Johannes Deknatel:

[After sending Christian greetings and expressing surprise that former letters were not answered he thanks all friends for helping the projected colony in Nova Scotia. He also thanks them for the kindness shown his father (Hans, who died in 1752) during his life. The great need drives him to ask for further favors. Their people do not even have bread.] I am greatly troubled to feel that you think the money is for myself. We need what we ask for to help others. [He hopes that those in power will] take "our part" when we are assailed, or when they speak evil of us. Our congregation has been proceeded against again; another decree has been made against us; the Lord will turn it to great good.

Christian Burkholder.

God had heard their cry and knew the longings of their hearts, but Christian, senior, must die, March, 1755, before the Burkholder family can embark on the journey to Pennsylvania. The widow with her family of six, Mary, Anna, Veronica, Christian, age nine, Peter, age seven, and Ulrich, age five, braved the pirates and the briny deep. After a long journey they arrived safely in America, proceeding immediately to the land of Hans Groff in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, some sixty miles west of Philadelphia.

10 This Christian may be the one referred to in *Menn. Quar. Rev.*, April, 1940, p. 78, first full line.

When they arrived in Earl Township, Lancaster County, things were not so promising. The years 1753 to 1755 were extremely trying years of severe drought. The earth was parched and all forms of vegetation perished. Famine seemed impending. Then the Seven Years' War (in Europe) or the French and Indian War (in America) broke out in 1756. The Indians allied themselves with the French and scalped Pennsylvanians an many sides. By the Treaty of Paris in 1763 the French lost their American colonies, all of Canada, Nova Scotia, and India; and England also obtained Florida from Spain. Prussia under Frederick the Great and England under George III were now the great powers of Europe. In Earl Township the non-Mennonites carried rifles into their grain fields even after peace was declared. That summer they also had the severest hailstorm of local history.

Then came the trying years of the Revolutionary War period. Prior thereto Christian Burkholder, junior, had married Anna, daughter of Daniel and granddaughter of Hans Groff, the noted pioneer of Groffdale. They started farming in 1766 on the father-in-law's farm of 151 acres and 156 perches, which they purchased in 1770, and sold in 1790 to Jabez Schuh of Manheim Township.[11] In 1784 he obtained 87 acres from Peter Miller which he sold to Christian Hurst in 1789. In 1789 Christian also bought two tracts from George Reine on the banks of the Conestoga, west of Fiandt's Mill, one of 61¼ acres and one of 170 acres at $40 per acre. In 1787 and 1788 he bought two seventy-acre tracts along the Conestoga from Alexander and William McCleary. He retired on the place near Fiandt's Mill which he reserved when he sold 154 acres to his son, Christian, in 1800. Thus he experienced in trying times the truth that "the meek shall inherit the earth."

Like most of the pioneers Christian Burkholder industriously applied himself to agriculture. Wheat, rye, oats, and barley were the principal crops, some flax and hemp were grown. All clothing was homespun. The women in addition to providing for the household without the help of modern conveniences usually took their place in the arduous tasks of the field beside their husbands and brothers. Horses were scarce and oxen generally were used in the field. If the Indians had burned tracks through the forest, primitive

[11] Lancaster County Court House Records: KK 585; P.115; 8 25-30; RR 202; GG 369; FF 388; WW 157; UU 350-359, the latter farm in Warwick Township for Daniel. Daniel Burkholder Martin, a descendant of the sixth generation, lives on part of the Christian Burkholder homestead.

ox-carts could take the grain to the gristmills; if not, it was carried on horseback. Harvest hands earned 33 cents per day and wheat was 65 cents per bushel. The chief meat was deer and wild turkeys from the forests. A 20-pound turkey could be bought for 12½ cents and a fat deer for 25 cents. Boots and spectacles were a curiosity when Christian was young. No calfskin shoes were known. The floors in the story-and-a-half houses were carpetless. The walls were generally plastered but unpapered and unpainted. The platters were of wood and the dishes of pewter. Life was simple and money scarce. By 1760 the Conestoga wagon began to come into use slowly. The Philadelphia Pike was built in 1792 and the stage coach began its trips from Philadelphia to Pittsburg in 1804. In 1793 one of every nine Pennsylvanians died of yellow fever, and the disease returned in 1797.

Christian Burkholder's family of eight included Anna and Elizabeth (both of whom died without issue); Christiana, wife of Samuel Reiff, descendant of Deacon Abram Reiff of Salford; Barbara, wife of Dr. Christian Weaver; Marie, wife of John Weaver; Christian, Jr., (1775-1862), married to Anna Bear (1778-1839), the ancestor of the Kissel Hill Burkholders; Daniel of Warwick, who died without issue; Abraham (1768-1840) married to Catherine Eby (1771-1886), sister of Bishop Peter Eby, who lived on one of his father's farms.[12] He was ordained minister at Groffdale, but by consent of the congregation he served only as deacon.

Christian's brother Peter (1747-1799), who was married to Margaret Huber of New Holland, farmed in Earl Township nearby until the early 1790s, when they moved to Dale Enterprise, Virginia.[13] On a trip to his homeland he died and is buried near his famous brother in the beautiful Groffdale Cemetery. He was the father of the noted Bishop Peter Burkholder of Virginia, grandfather of Bishop Martin, and ancestor of Bishop John of Mahoning County, Ohio, and Bishop David of Nappanee, Indiana.[13]

Christian's brother Ulrich (1750-1804) was ordained by Christian as the first minister of the Bowmansville-Allegheny District in 1785. He was an ancestor of Henry Burkholder of Farmersville, as well as a number of Burkholders in Ontario.

In 1770 Christian was ordained minister by Bishop Bentz Hershey for the scattered "Menonists" of Earl Township. A church

12 *The Burkholder Family Reunion,, Report VII,* Harrisburg, 1932, p. 60.
13 *The Burkholder Family Reunion Report VII,* Harrisburg, 1932, pp. 60-96.

schoolhouse was built as early as 1755 by Hans Groff, and Henry Landis, his son-in-law, gave a tract in trust forever to the community on January 17, 1775, the first part of the present cemetery at Groffdale (Brick).[14] Hans Rudolph Nagele, the first minister here, was interested in an "awakening" among the Mennonites as early as 1724. However he came under the influence of the Ephrata Cloister group, and left the Mennonite Church early in the next decade, living and dying at Ephrata as Brother Jehoiada.[15] Hans Peter Sommey was the minister in Earl Township from the middle seventeen-thirties on. The next known minister and the first to be ordained here was Christian Burkholder.

In 1780 he was ordained bishop for the Earls and Brecknock townships, possibly by Bishop Valentine Metzler. Weaverland's first meetinghouse was built in 1766, and Bowmansville's in 1794. These were the three established centers of that day, although Bowman's Mills in Berks County was also a strong center. Here Christian's greatest labors were expended, although the scope of his influence extended into the Hammer Creek district [16] and over Lancaster County in general.

As a minister in 1777 Christian Burkholder signed the paper that excommunicated Martin Boehm as a Mennonite bishop. The preliminary phase of the United Brethren Church began in Isaac Long's barn near Landis Valley in 1767, moved into its second phase in 1777, and served as a leaven in the entire county until its formal organization in 1800. Their cry was that the Mennonite Church is "cold, dead and formal,"[17] and they were the cause of not a little concern to the bishops. Then in 1785 the Conoy schism of the Jacob

[14] H. M. J. Klein, *Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, A History,* New York, 1924. V. I, p. 139.

[15] Klein, *op. cit.* I, 400. Some of the family are buried at Cloisters, some at Groffdale.

[16] According to Ezra Eby, *History of Waterloo Township,* Berlin, Ont. 1895, he baptized Bishop Benjamin Eby at the "Conestoga Meeting House." Because Benjamin was reared in the Hammer Creek District, M. G. Weaver thought Christian Burkholder did it there. The first Meetinghouse in Warwick Township was the 1792 house, which Weaver did not mention and which at this writing I would not put on the Conestoga.

[17] On May 8, 1803, Christian Newcomer, an ex-Mennonite, third bishop of the United Brethren Church, in his *Diary* (p. 71) writes: "Ground covered with snow. I attended Mennonite Meeting in Lancaster County. I listened attentively to two of their preachers, but their discourses appeared to me cold, formal, and dead. May God grant us all more zeal and energy." This was while visiting his relatives around Zeltenreich's Church. If the meeting was to the south, Bishop Peter Eby likely was one of these poor preachers; if to the north at Groffdale, Bishop Christian Burkholder may have been one.

Engle group crystallized into the formation of the Brethren in Christ Church, or River Brethren. In 1790 from Frysville in Christian Burkholder's district Jacob Albright began to form the Evangelical Church. These movements in "this German ferment" were no doubt the main cause for the writing of "Addresses to the Youth on True Repentance and Saving Faith in Christ Jesus, Pure Love to God and our Neighbor, obedience to the Word of God and a full surrender of the soul into his hands." which was composed by Bishop Burkholder in 1792. This has been used extensively both in the German and English editions throughout the American Mennonite and Amish Churches.[18] It still is in use as the "Fourth Part" of *Conversation of Saving Faith for the Young in Questions and Answers,* a new edition of which was published in 1941, by the Mennonite Publishing House at Scottdale, Pa.

The manuscript of this booklet was signed by the twenty-seven members of the Lancaster Mennonite Conference in 1792, who probably were:—Bishops, Benjamin Hershey II,[19] of Lancaster, Christian Burkholder, Jacob Brubaker of Rohrerstown, and John Herr of Strasburg; Preachers, Henry Metzler of Strasburg, Jacob Hartman of Mellinger's, Christian Hess of Salisbury Township, Joseph Horst of Paradise, Henry Martin of Weaverland, Ulrich Burkholder of Bowmansville, Daniel Gehman of Gehman's, Peter Leaman of Warwick Township, John Bear and Jacob Myer of Hammer Creek, Abraham Brubaker of Indiantown, Samuel Nissley of Rapho, Jacob Hershey of Kraybill, Peter Risser of Risser's and John Graybill of Juniata County; Deacons, Martin Mellinger of Mellinger's, Henry Weber of Allegheny, Hans Oberholtzer of Gehman's, John Nissley of Kraybill's, Christian Eby of Hammer Creek, and undoubtedly one from Lebanon County.[20]

[18] It is freely quoted by John F. Funk, *The Mennonite Church and Her Accusers,* Elkhart, 1878.

[19] This man was moderator of the Lancaster Conference until 1812, if he was bishop all his days. The fact that Christian Burkholder wrote this in 1792, and that he infers that he asked the church leads me to think that he might have been moderator. I notice further that Jacob Brubaker, Hershey's neighbor, was ordained bishop in 1783. Why this was done during the life of both Benjamin I and Benjamin II, if the latter was functioning, is a puzzle. It is probable that Christian Burkholder was moderator of the Conference for a number of years.

[20] These names are not on record. The document itself states that this number signed it. Presumably this was the size of the Conference in 1792 (forty-five in 1844. Cf. Rupp; and two hundred and two in February, 1944). All but two are known; two are not identified and may have come from counties in western Pennsylvania, then under this Conference.

A few excerpts from this excellent work will answer the charges of the critics of the period, and will also show the conditions of the times and the solid foundation upon which the Mennonite Church was ever built. All quotations and page references are from the 1941 edition.

Asked at Baptism

I. Do you believe in the Almighty God who created heaven and earth, and all other things visible and who preserves the same by his power; and in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, that He is the true Messiah, Redeemer, and Saviour, who died for us on the Cross; and in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father, who leads us into all truth, and puts us in mind of all that the Son hath said?

II. As Christ says that no man can serve two masters, are you willing to renounce Satan, the world, your own will and all other dark and Satanical works?

III. Will you pledge yourself to be obedient to the doctrines of Christ as Moses says in Acts 3:22 . . . . Thus we are bound to be obedient to the doctrines of Christ and his apostles even unto blood; also to administer the order in Matt. 18:15, 16 among the members of the Church in humility and love. Upon unreserved compliance you will be received. [Page 240].

On Baptism

The only commandment on baptism given by Christ is recorded in Matt. 28:19 and is briefly as follows: "Baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," to which there is no commandment added that people should go into the water to be baptized. And "where no law is there is no transgression" (Rom. 4:15). Nor is it allowed to add anything to, or take anything from the commandments of God (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev. 22:18, 19). [Page 241].

On Human Nature

As almost everyone thinks the chief fault is in someone else, and not in himself; poor man overlooks himself, without thinking of his own depraved and deceived heart. In such a state man possesses great liberty for himself, in consequence of which the young fall into licentiousness and sensuality. And with all this, although he is nothing, poor man may think himself to be something and thus deceive himself. Indeed there are many who consider the present state of Christendom as a Babel, who take great pains to destroy it, but who, on the contrary, only exert themselves to build up the ruined city of Jericho, which they call Zion. [Page 177].

Nature is inclined to love natural and earthly things. Man has also a strong love for himself and his own righteousness. [Page 195].

On Repentance

Repentance is the first (Matt. 4:17) and the last commandment (Luke 24:46, 47) to his disciples. [Page 179].

All men without contradiction need repentance, as they have all sinned, are children of wrath, and are by nature carnally and earthly minded.

Yea, in this state our hearts are a desert, overgrown with thistles and thorns, and into this desert comes the voice of the preacher: "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight" (Luke 3:4). [Page 179].

The apostles always wrote of true repentance, of saving faith, of true obedience to the commandments of the Son of God in baptism and the Lord's Supper, according to the ordinances of the Church, in order that their disciples might obey "from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto them." [Page 175].

Yea, to one who is penitent . . . every thing sinful [becomes] a great sin. [Page 180].

Thus speaks and feels a person who has come to a knowledge of his sins. His heart is tender as melted wax. He is penitent. He is heartily sorry that so much evil cleaves unto him, for when he wants to do good, evil is present with him. [Page 180].

Here it may be remarked that a person who is meek and lowly in heart cannot bring forth fruit that is externally the appearance of pride, whether it be in actions, words, or the putting on of apparel (I Pet. 3:3). But when further the heart is filled with the meekness of Christ, it bespeaks a good tree (Matt. 12:33), while on the other hand evil fruit grows out of the evil seed which the enemy has sown in the human heart by means of the senses and thought, whereby much evil fruit has been brought forth, particularly in reference to the lust of incontinence, with which poor man is as it were intoxicated. [Page 181].

What does it help us if we embrace and adhere to such confession of faith, and yet lead a heathenish course of life, in all kinds of sin and wickedness? (James 2:14). [Page 188].

We may see that true faith and a full surrender of the soul into the hands of God, is a matter of very great importance (Mark 1:16; Rom. 1:16, 17; Matt. 8:13; 9:22). [Page 189].

True repentance [brings us] . . . to a pious and virtuous course of life so we do no more that which we were wont to do in our former sinful life [Page 183].

The New Life

A person who has received a new heart also speaks with a new tongue.

Now my dear young hearts, if the Word of God binds us so closely to love Him as our Creator with all our hearts, and with all our strength there remains nothing of our hearts wherewith to love the vanities and pleasures of this world (I John 2:15, 16). [Page 194].

Let every one well distinguish whether he is actuated by the love of God, or by the impure love and lusts of nature. For love and desire have a great influence on the mind either for good or for evil; so much so that they make all pains and labor comparatively light and easy (Col. 3:14, 15). [Page 194].

Watchfulness

We are ridiculed by the world. Of others we see bad examples. Again the enemy tempts us with self-exaltation, trying to persuade us that we have had much experience, much more than we really have had, that we are far in advance in the divine life, etc. In short he tempts us in every way. [Page 182].

If you talk much of your experience and your life shows the contrary, you will become a laughingstock before the world, and a hypocrite before God. [Page 214].

Now if you have ever bent your knees before God and united with the Church, and made a vow unto the Lord; then give all diligence to be faithful unto Him. Watch and pray daily and hourly, and resist the enemy in the faith. [Page 248].

Marriage

Why the rule that one is only allowed to marry among members of one's own church? There were twelve tribes in Israel. Now which of these tribes was most acceptable to the Lord, I know not, though one may have been more so than the other. Yet the Lord did not permit one tribe to intermarry with another as is seen in Num. 36:6-8. Now in the first world the inhabitants followed their own will in this matter, contrary to the Spirit of God (Gen. 6:2). Christ says it will again be in the latter days as it was in the days of Noah. But it was particularly because carnal-minded youth is encouraged by such as are of reputation, or in authority, that it was displeasing to the Lord that one tribe should intermarry with another. But a still greater displeasure did the Lord bear to the children of Israel intermarrying with heathen nations. This he absolutely forbade them. (Deut. 7:3; Ex. 34:15). Now, I say, consider well what the Lord says in these quotations. [Page 238].

Non-Resistance

Reader, perhaps you have lived for some time in a state of uncharitableness with your neighbor, and it would not cost you your life, as it did your Saviour, to make peace with him. It would only cost a little of your pride and selfrighteousness, and can you not give up these? [Page 200].

And should it cost you something of your temporal property to plant and maintain peace, God is rich enough to restore to you all that you may thus lose or sacrifice. And should he not do this temporally, he will richly reward you spiritually, to the welfare of your immortal soul. [Page 200].

The kingdom of Satan is an unpeaceable kingdom, it being ever engaged in quarrels and wars. The kingdom of Christ on the contrary is a peaceable kingdom. It consists of nothing but love, peace, and unity. [Page 198].

Peace

Where there is neither love nor peace, there is neither happiness nor prosperity. [Page 20].

Cherish no envy nor hatred about religion towards any person, for in consequence of such envy and hatred much innocent blood has been shed. [Page 205].

Divisions

Divisions grow out of man's pride and self-will and these again have a tendency to produce their like in others, viz., pride and self-will. [Page 212].

Sin

If a man is so blinded by sin that he does not see sin anymore, he is much poorer and more miserable than the man who is deprived of his natural sight. [Page 199].

Wage war against all evil desires. Preserve your feet from all evil steps. For if you give any one occasion to sin, it is already a proof that you do not walk in love (I John 5:17). [Page 203].

For that to which we accustom ourselves in youth is not easily left off in old age. [Page 203].

The Word of God

If we do not enjoy its precious contents it follows that we are yet in a state of spiritual disease, if not dead, dead in sin. [Page 187].

All worldly and spiritual matters that come within your calling, "prove" by the Word of God, and let this word be your guide through your whole lifetime, for it gives good counsel in all matters. So let the Bible and the New Testament be your chief reading book. [Page 204].

The Times

As there have been, and still are, many opposers, we also equally share the cross, ignominy and contempt. [Page 175].

I feel myself burdened in my mind with the various thoughts in respect of the many opinions of our times. Each one thinks his own are the best, they being as he thinks founded on the truth, thus each one in his own opinion founds his views on the truth, and yet these views are in some respects directly opposed to one another. . . . At the present time things appear to be in a very bad state, much confused and greatly in a state of decline. [Page 218].

The pomp and show with which men decorate their bodies arise out of an impure and proud heart, and are an abomination in the sight of God as well as idolatry. [Page 234].

The Christians of the present day go to war with one another by the thousands, kill and destroy one another in the most horrible manner, and this even such as are of the same religious faith, who boast of holding the true doctrine, and who are united by the sacrament into the same body. But it is not to be believed that the true body of Christ will injure itself. Further there are many among all religious denominations who show by their fruits that they are not true branches of the Vine, Christ, inasmuch as one brother defrauds and belies another, and does violence and injustice to him. [Page 208].

What a great difference between the doctrine and deportment of Christ . . . and that of the professed followers of Christ at the present day. [Page 207].

Sincerity

Let this be a rule to you from your youth to your old age, that in all your actions you are sincere, without falsehood and deceit. [Page 202].

These few excerpts not only depict the man, but the times, and portray the Mennonite Church in a period when different religious groups were preying upon it. These prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that the Church was not "cold, formal and dead," but, though never emotional and always conservative, ever tried to produce a people who here followed the lowly Prince of Peace and should not be disappointed at the judgment.

Bishop Burkholder's wife Anna died in 1795 and was buried at Groffdale. His daughters Anna (d. 1833) and Elizabeth (d. 1823), spinisters,[21] kept house for him at a small home east of but adjoining the bridge at Fiandt's Mill (razed some eighty years ago). Here he worshiped God and served the Mennonite Church first at home, but also in the many sections, north, south, and west, where these noble folk pioneered in other sections. A large block of the membership in the Hammer Creek district and in the Bowmansville district, moved after the turn of the century into the Ontario Province of King George III, practically wiping out the Allegheny group. This was largely due to their sympathies with England in the Revolution and to their fears regarding the nation still in its infancy.[22] Some of these went by way of Franklin County.

On May 13, 1809, at the age of 63, Bishop Burkholder laid his armor by, for a much needed early reward. Jacob Brubaker and Peter Eby were the able bishops who were now ready to continue the leadership in the Lancaster Conference for the next decades, after Christian Burkholder had so remarkably brought it through the closing rough years of his life.

A gray slab stone in the beautiful Groffdale cemetery, three miles south of his home, marks the bishop's grave alongside of his wife and in line with his two daughters. His will,[23] probated May 20, 1809, reads:—I commend my soul into the hands of the Almighty God that gave it and my body I commend to the earth to be buried in a decent Christian manner, and as touching my worldly estate wherewith it hath pleased God to bless me in this life . . ." He bequeathed ten pounds to the Congregation for the use of the poor. His woodland home was assigned to his two youngest daughters who kept house for him.

[21] A visit to the Groffdale Cemetery will verify these dates.

[22] Modern Canadian Mennonites hesitate to concur in this, but they should consult Ezra Eby's *Waterloo Township History.*

[23] *Will Book* K 1 59, Lancaster County Courthouse.

Thus passed a great man of God, a pioneer of a godly line of leaders in the Mennonite Church, who had learned the values of a godly life from his parents who in fortitude under pressure had indelibly imprinted them on their children. Loyal and true to the faith of the forefathers, they enjoyed the blessings of the same in communities where the Cloud abode. Trying indeed were the times, but great the reward; and their inestimable works are still following them. May we ever remember these great pioneers and their noble deeds, not to worship them, but to appreciate more highly their faith and never turn therefrom.

THE DEVOTIONAL LITERATURE OF THE MENNONITES IN DANZIG AND EAST PRUSSIA TO 1800

Robert Friedmann

The Mennonites in the German East are the direct descendants of the Dutch Mennonites, and the first congregations consisted exclusively of Dutch refugees. The traditions say that Menno Simons personally visited Danzig between the years 1547 and 1555. In 1561 Dirk Philips, the forceful collaborator of Menno Simons and author of the popular *Enchiridion,* began work at Danzig, continuing there until his death in 1568. Constant intercourse was maintained between the East and Holland and we are not surprised therefore that the spiritual life was almost exclusively fed by Dutch literature. This group seems to have had so little devotional literature of its own that it was never studied, indeed, scarcely mentioned in historical treatments.[1] It is true that it was not very extensive, but it had its values and as time went on it contributed to the development of a spiritual life of distinctive character. Since this literary heritage was preserved through the ages, first in the new homesteads in Russia (1789-1874) and then in the United States (since 1874), thus exerting its influence on many generations, an attempt to trace its history may be worth while. Reprints in the German language, published in the United States, form the main source for this first outline of Eastern German Mennonite literature, incomplete though it might be.

The church in the East was a Dutch church and consequently used the Dutch language. We need therefore not be surprised that the first literary product of the Danzig congregation was a Dutch Bible, the so-called *Schottländische* Bible of 1598,[2] prepared by a

[1] Literature: W. Mannhardt, *Die Wehrfreiheit der Altpreussischen Mennoniten,* Danzig, 1863; M. Klassen, *Geschichte der wehrlosen Taufgesinnten Gemeinden von der Zeit der Aposteln bis auf die Gegenwart,* Danzig, 1873; H. G. Mannhardt, *Die Danziger Mennoniten Gemeinde,* Danzig, 1919; the same author's article "Danzig" in *Menn. Lex.* I, 391ff. On Elbing see *Menn. Lex.* I, 548ff.; the article on "Preussen" has not yet appeared. Very useful is P. M. Friesen, *Die Altevangelische Mennonitische Brüderschaft in Russland, 1789-1910,* Halbstadt, (Russia), 1911, pp. 36-70 dealing with Prussia. The article "Marienburger Werder," *Menn. Lex.* III, 36f., does not give very much in our line. The newest book, Horst Penner *Ansiedlung Mennonitischer Niederländer im Weichselmündungsgebiet* (*Schriftenreihe des Menn. Geshichtsvereins* No. 3), Weierhof (Pfalz), 1940, again gives no consideration whatever to the present subject.

[2] So named after its printing place, "Schottland," a suburb of Danzig where many Mennonites lived. See H. G. Mannhardt, *Danziger Mennonitengemeide,* 1919, p. 44. This Bible is now extremely rare.

brother by the name of Quirin or Krin Vermeulen. "The notes and selected texts for mottoes prove most clearly that the editor in genuine Mennonite fashion did not want to deduct dogmas from the Bible, but a Christianity of faith and practice. In so doing he almost overemphasized external discipline and strictness."[3] But it was just this discipleship that furnished the sturdy foundation of this "pioneer" church in the East.

It took almost two centuries for this church to adopt the language of the surrounding world, that is the German language, in its ecclesiastical life. The first German sermon in a Danzig Sunday service did not occur before 1771.[4] However, the situation was similar to that which the Swiss Mennonite immigrants experienced in the United States: while the church service was conducted in the conservative older form and language, the general life of the people was unavoidably adjusted to the new language and customs. In Prussia also, different from America, many converts joined the church, and they, of course, spoke German. Consequently we find the first German Mennonite publication in Prussia as early as 1660, namely a *Confession of Faith*.[5] As its title states, this book represents a union confession: *Glaubensbekenntnis derer so man nennt die Vereinigten Flämischen, Friesischen und Hochdeutschen Taufgesinnten Mennoniten Gemeinden. Ausgegeben durch die Gemeinde in Preussen, im Jahre Christi* 1660. Strangely enough, there was no such union in Prussia, but rather a very definite division between two groups, the Flemish branch on the one side which was the conservative group, also called the "Fine," "Clear," or in *Plattdeutsch* "Clerken," and the "Frisian" branch on the other side, also called the "Groben" or "Bekümmerten," who were actually the more broad-minded wing. According to W. Mannhardt,[6] the "union" confession is nothing more than a translation of an old Dutch original, as is stated in a seventeenth century edition published at Frankfurt and Leipzig. We know that in Holland there were several confessions of this type, for instance one by the well known J. P. Schabalie; but the present writer was not able to verify the particular statement by Mannhardt because of lack of material. Unfortunately the

3 Mannhardt, *Ibid.*

4 *Menn. Lex.* I, 391.

5 *Menn. Lex.* I, 159; II, 470. This "Confession" was briefly discussed in my article "Dutch Mennonite Devotional Literature, etc." *Menn. Quart. Rev.* XV, 1941, page 200.

6 W. Mannhardt, *Wehrfreiheit* etc. 1863, Appendix, p. XXIII.

location of this old copy of 1600 is also unknown and we cannot describe the original content of this book. The book was very often reprinted; we know of editions of 1751,1756, 1781, and 1854 in Prussia; 1853, 1873, and 1912 in Russia; and 1878 in the United States.[7] As was pointed out in my study on "Dutch Mennonite Devotional Literature,"[5] this Confession of Faith has become as dominant among the Eastern (Prussian-Russian) Mennonites as the Dordrecht Confession of 1632 (German of 1664) has become among all Swiss Mennonites and their descendants. We also know that our book was a complete manual or companion containing a catechism and prayer formulary.

It seems that this catechism, entitled, *Kurze Unterweisung aus der Schrift. . .* (consisting of thirty-five questions and answers) was the very first Mennonite catechism in the German language,[8] and at the same time the most successful one, as the countless reprints up to the most recent times indicate. This is also true for American Mennonitism, since all editions of the *Christliches Gemütsgespräch* in this country since 1769[9] have this handy and useful *Fragenbüchlein*[10] as an appendix. The second edition of Christian Burkholder's *Anrede an die Jugend,* 1804, also includes it.[11] In reading it one gets the impression that this writing is less a catechism proper than a formulary for the examination of young candidates for baptism. This is apparently also the reason for the unusual brevity of the book (eleven pages) and the incompleteness of the answers suggested. As an especially striking feature, it might be noted that the great principle of nonresistance is treated in but one item, and even there in a mere vague and general way. The question reads, Whether one is permitted to exercise vengeance. It is answered as follows, ". . . We have to do good to our neighbors, yea, to our

[7] The 1878 edition was published at Elkhart, Indiana, according to H. S. Bender, *Two Centuries,* etc., p. 96. Bethel College Library, North Newton, Kansas, has four editions: 1781 (Elbing), 1853 (Odessa), 1873 (Berdiansk), 1878 (Elkhart). Goshen College Library has only the Elkhart edition. Neff uses for his articles the edition of 1854 at Graudenz, Prussia, which, however, distinctly declares that the first edition was issued in Prussia in 1660. Whether this first edition is identical with all later ones or whether these have been amplified could not be ascertained. The checked editions are all identical.

[8] See Neff on "Katechismen," *Menn. Lex.* II. 460-471, the only place where catechisms are treated. Neff does not refer to any literature. His article is a mere enumeration and does not contain any analysis or discussion regarding the character and inter-connection of these books.

[9] Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 5 and *passim.*

[10] First English translation 1836, Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 15; here listed as an appendix to an English edition of the Dordrecht Confession.

[11] Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 9.

enemies, by meekness (gentleness)." It is obvious that this formulation does not exhaust in any way the basic Mennonite principle of nonresistance and one must wonder that a formulary of such extensive circulation does not bring more than that which would be acceptable to all Christian bodies.

This manual of 1660 was issued in Prussia, presumably in Elbing, and certainly used throughout all the Eastern congregations. However, the church in Danzig had its own history, since this city, the Hamburg or Amsterdam of the East, then belonged to the kingdom of Poland and not to Prussia. One might suppose that the spiritual life there was fairly independent from that of the nearby Elbing church, and also, owing to the oppression by the Roman Catholic clergy, was more alert and active than in Elbing. In Danzig we find a leading personality, strong, faithful, and most capable of defending the old Mennonite position and of guiding the flock in loyalty to it. This was Georg Hansen, a shoemaker "like Jakob Böhme,"[12] minister from 1655 and elder from 1690 until his death in 1703. He was "a man of great reading, skillful both in word and pen."[13] He kept also the church archives very carefully from 1667 to 1692. In 1671 he published a *Glaubensbericht für die Jugend, durch einen Liebhaber der Wahrheit gestellt und ans Licht gebracht,* without his name on the title-page, but signing the preface with his initials "G. H." This book is the second German catechism of the church, a rather extensive theological work of high value. It was reprinted in 1768[14] and later became very popular among the Mennonite congregations in Russia. When the latter emigrated to America, they brought this book with them and had it reprinted in Elkhart, Indiana, some time before 1900 "auf Verlangen des Johannes Friesen, Ältester der Gemeinde zu Rheinland, Manitoba."[15]

It is worth while to study this catechism of 319 pages, or more correctly, this "instruction to the youth." It is not put up in the form of questions and answers but has the form of an "address" of the following style: "Sehet, meine lieben Kinder, dieses glauben wir . . ." About one-fifth of the entire contents deals with theological teachings on God, Christ, the Fall and the Restoration of Man. Hansen devotes about thirty pages to the question of the Incarnation, treated

12 H. G. Mannhardt, *Geshchichteder Danziger Menn. Gemeinde,* 1919, p. 73.
13 *Ibid.* See also *Menn. Lex.* II. 250, article by Neff.
14 Neff in *Menn. Lex.* I., 160; W. Mannhardt, *Wehrfreiheit,* p. XLVI.
15 Not in Bender's bibliography. Copy in Goshen College Library.

in the spirit of general Protestant theology. Very fine is the chapter on "the Church of God"; the following quotation may illustrate the character of Hansen's teaching on the topic.

> Lasset euch nicht schrecken, liebe Kinder, ob die rechte Gemeinde schon von der Welt für eine Sekte gehalten wird, und dass ihr an allen Enden widersprochen wird . . . . Ihr müsst die Unkosten wohl überschlagen, ob ihr diesen Kampf des Leidens auch erdulden könnt. Dass, wenn ihr euch zu dieser Gemeinde begeben habt, und Trübsal und Verfolgung sich erhebt um des Wortes Gottes Willen, dass ihr euch dann nicht ärgern möchtet. (p. 71f)

Here he also teaches nonresistance (p. 84f), using the popular parable of the spiritual armor in Ephesians 6: 16. Clearness and vigor are no doubt the outstanding qualities of this book. A completely unusual feature is chapter twenty, *On Free Will.* No other Mennonite writing is known which deals expressly with this great theological question, and for this reason it offers a real contribution. Hansen attempts to harmonize, though not very successfully, Paul's position in Romans 9:18 with the idea of freedom of choice. Interestingly the main biblical locus for this purpose is taken from the apocryphal book, *Jesus Sirach,* 15:20, 21, and the pseudepigraphical book, *Fourth Ezra,* ch. 7 and 8.[16]

In 1677 a slander of the Mennonite Church by the Roman Catholics came to its climax, and the king of Poland ordered a thorough examination of the whole case by the Catholic bishop, Stanislaus Sarnowsky. To meet this challenge, a new *Confession of Faith* was drawn up by Georg Hansen, signed by two elders, and presented at the episcopal ecclesiastical office.[17] This confession was published several times: by the bishop's commission both in German and Latin in 1678, and by the Mennonites in German in the same year and again ninety years later in 1768.[18] On January 20, 1678, an oral examination took place at which Hansen and the two elders had to answer separately forty-eight questions before the bishop and nine monks of different Catholic orders. It was a difficult and delicate task, but Hansen was exceedingly clever and prompt, and thanks to his firm stand, the brethren were completely released from the suspicion

[16] It is well known that both books were very popular among Mennonites and Anabaptists. Both books were translated by Luther as well as by Leo Jud of Zurich (*Froschauer Bible,* Zurich, 1524-29) Only the more recent reprints of the Luther Bible omit the *Ezra* book.

[17] See H. G. Mannhardt, *op. cit* p. 77ff.

[18] Reprinted in 1768. See *Menn. Lex.* I. 160; see also the *Katalog der Menn. Kirchengemeinde zu Danzig,* Danzig, 1868.

of being Socinians or Arians (Antitrinitarians). Later Hansen wrote down his answers with all the expositions, and in 1696 published it in the Dutch language at Amsterdam. The Russian Mennonites preserved this book and brought it with them when they came to America in 1874. Elder Isaac Peters, (1826-1911) the one time leader of what is now called the "Evangelical Mennonite Brethren," translated it into German and published it in Elkhart, Indiana, in 1893 under the title *Ein Fundamentbuch der christlichen Lehre, welche unter den Mennoniten in Preussen . . . gelehrt wird* (small size, 335 pages).[19] The author is not named but on page 55 his initials, "G. H." appear. As an introduction, the book prints also the afore-mentioned Confession of Faith. In general it has the same style as the *Glaubensbericht,* but it is much more theoretical, thus providing the church in days of trial with good apologetic material carefully composed and often supported by quotations from the "beloved brother Menno Simons."[20]

When he was almost seventy years of age, Georg Hansen wrote a new and extensive book in Dutch, *Spiegel des Levens,* dealing in the main with the new birth, which was published posthumously in Amsterdam in 1705.[21] It has never been reprinted nor translated, and no copies are known to be in this country.

Hansen was the only eminent leader among the Prussian churches. However, this group of Mennonites was rather productive in attempts to formulate its faith in confessions and catechisms. Christian Neff, in his article "Katechismen" in the *Mennonitisches Lexikon,*[22] enumerates at least six catechisms published by the group during the eighteenth century, one of which was so well done that it has become exceedingly popular and is still in use here and there.

[19] Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 145. He does not mention the author, but lists the book under "*Peters, Isaac* (Tr.)." Goshen College Library has a copy.

[20] Because of possible confusion a survey of all these books by Hansen and their various editions might be useful:

1. *Glaubensbericht an die Jugend,* 1671; second edition 1768, as appendix to the Hansen *Confession of Faith* (Danzig); reprinted about 1900 (?) Elkhart, Indiana.
2. *Confession of Faith*: Latin and German edition by the Catholic bishop's commission 1678, Danzig; in the *Fundamentbuch* (No. 3 below) Dutch, Amsterdam, 1696; German with No. 1. above, 1768; and in No. 3 below, Elkhart, Ind., 1893.
3. *Fundamentbuch,* Dutch, Amsterdam, 1696; German, Elkhart, 1893.

[21] With the subtitle: *Geschreven door Georg Hansen, in syn Leven Oudsten* (elder) *der Gemeynte Godts to Danzigh, maar* (but) *nu door eenige Beminders* (lovers) *der Waerheyt ter eeren Godts ende stichting* (edification) *haers Naesten* (neighbor) *in Druck uytgegeven.*" According to the *Catalogue,* 1919, p. 231, and *Menn. Lex.* II., p. 250.

[22] *Menn. Lex.* II, 469.

This is the *Kurze und einfältige Unterweisung aus der Heiligen Schrift,* published in Elbing, Prussia, in 1778,[23] the only catechism which also entered the Amish group in the principality of Waldeck and the Southwestern German congregations in the Palatinate. "On demand of the church in Hesse and Waldeck" it was reprinted in 1797 (in Waldeck), 1801 (in Strasburg), and 1834 (in Giessen, Hesse).[24] It was adopted by the Amish in the duchy of Zweybrücken (1855), becoming the so-called *Zweybrückischer Katechismus,* and by the Mennonite Church of Montbeliard, France (Mümpelgard). At the latter place a French translation appeared as late as 1922. Some brethren brought it with them when they came to America, and it was reprinted here for the first time in 1824 in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, for the Mennonites of Waterloo County, Ontario.[25] In 1849 an English translation was made by I. D. Rupp, without the prayers included in other editions,[26] for the use of the Oberholtzer group or General Conference Mennonites of eastern Pennsylvania. In 1874 a revised translation "for the Mennonite Church in North America" was published in Elkhart, Indiana.[27] Many reprints of all these various editions up to the recent period reveal the usefulness of this small book for home and Sunday-school instruction. It is a very convenient textbook, short but precise and well articulated, much more effective than the other popular Mennonite catechism, the *Christliches Gemütsgespräch.*

More than half of the Elbing-Waldeck catechism deals with theological topics (creation, fall, redemption), the remaining part with the human response (faith, church, life and death). By and large the general arrangement follows the *Confession of Faith* by the Dutch minister Cornelis Ris of Hoorn, 1766 (German edition, Hamburg, 1776), the most popular Mennonite confession of the eighteenth century. There is an almost complete parallelism in the sequence of chapters, with two very important exceptions: Ris teaches[28] predestination ("About election and reprobation"), while this item is altogether omitted in the catechism. On the other hand, the catechism teaches about "the law as a schoolmaster *(Zucht-*

[23] According to Neff, American reprints give the date 1783 in the preface.

[24] Goshen College Library has a copy.

[25] Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 12.

[26] *Ibid.,* p. 91.

[27] *Ibid.,* p. 39.

[28] Cornelis de Ris, *De Geloofs leere der waare Mennonisten of Doopsgezinde,* Hoorn, 1766, chapter IX.

meister) to bring us unto Christ," which is lacking in Ris' book. But apart from the general parallel arrangement, the treatment of the catechism seems to be fully independent of the confession. In accord with its purpose it is simple and concise, stressing the necessity "that we must also be doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22)."

Yet there is one chapter which distinctly deviates from this line in a manner unknown to the old Anabaptist way of catechetical instruction. This is the chapter on "The Consequences of the Fall" with its strong emphasis on the dogma of original sin and total depravity. Here more than elsewhere in the catechism one recognizes the influence of the surrounding Protestantism. To be sure the Anabaptists also believe in the sinfulness of human nature and in the need for Divine grace and power, but they focussed their attention and teaching in general more on the possibility and the need of obedience and discipleship than on the doctrine of "total depravity" which was over-stressed by general Protestant theology both Lutheran and Calvinistic. In the catechism of 1778, the chapter under discussion follows this new line almost entirely. Question 11 reads as follows: "To what kind of death did Adam and his posterity become subject?" Answer: "To both spiritual and temporal death. Man became wholly incapable of that which is good, and he became liable to eternal punishment." Question 12: "What happened to Adam's posterity?" Answer: "All flesh has corrupted his way upon earth so that the Lord determined to destroy them from the earth." Question 14: "What do we learn from this?" Answer: "We learn that by nature we are incapable of good and children of wrath; and therefore being convinced of our miserable condition, we must seek God's grace and mercy."[29] In a similar way the *Pfälzisch-Hessische Katechismus* of 1861 states: "Wir sind von Natur aus gänzlich unfähig, die böse Lust in uns zu töten, und vor Gott gerecht und heilig zu leben. Die Schrift nennt uns in diesem Zustandt tot in Sünde und Übertretung."[30]

This is the customary Protestant viewpoint, as for instance, it is stated in the old Zurich catechism that "man is prone to resist

[29] Cornelis de Ris, in Chapter Eight, says only "we are wholly incapable of being saved by ourselves."

[30] Emil Händiges, *Die Lehre der Mennoniten in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, Kaiserslautern, 1921, p. 29.

God and His law and to hate his neighbor."[31] This entire chapter sheds new light on the far reaching spiritual change among Mennonites from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century. Georg Hansen in his *Glaubensbericht für die Jugend,* 1671, does not mention anything about this corruption of our deepest nature; he simply states that we are able to keep God's commandments by virtue of the Divine grace (II Cor. 3:5; 5:5). But with the coming of Pietism the church moved more and more toward the general Protestant pattern of theology and piety, and stressed inherited natural wickedness more than the capacity for obedience, in order to make conversion more effective. However, this spirit was not maintained throughout in the catechism of 1778, and there are also fine instructions on nonresistance and forbearance, love and good works and the like, which continue Mennonite convictions of old. This catechism also prints an appendix containing a collection of fourteen short prayers. They differ from those in the *Formulier* of the manuals of 1660 and 1664 and are of lesser significance.

The two forces in later Mennonitism, conservative loyalty to heritage and, at the same time, adoption of the new spirit of Pietism, can also be traced in Prussia during the entire eighteenth century. P. M. Friesen[32] tells us how revivals of the Moravian type, and Pietists like Tersteegen and others, "have brought to us in the home (i.e. church) once so good but later becoming almost neglected, empty and cold, new light, new warmth, and new food."[33] Unfortunately he does not illustrate his point by particular instances. A small booklet entitled, *Erweckung an das Herz der Jugend,* by the Mennonite minister, Anton Welck, published in Elbing, Prussia, in 1788, does illustrate this trend. The fact that it was reprinted in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, in 1824,[34] and for a second time in Scottdale, Pa., in 1911,[35] shows that it continued its influence also in this country.

But the other attitude also persisted, the endeavor to preserve the spirit of Mennonitism proper. A representative of this attitude was the respectable Danzig citizen, Isaac van Dühren (1725-1800),

[31] See Paul Wernle, *Der Schweizer Protestantismus im 18. Jahrhundert,* Tübingen, 1923, pp. 95 and 277.

[32] P. M. Friesen, *Die Altevangelische Mennonitische Brüderschaft in Russland,* Halbstadt, 1911.

[33] *Ibid.,* p. 41. The whole paragraph is very informative.

[34] Bender, *op. cit.,* p. 90.

[35] *Mennonitische Rundschau,* Scottdale, Pa., 1911, pp. 3 ff.

a clothmaker and dyer, as well as a minister from 1775 on.[36] In 1782 he wrote a *Geschichte der Märtyrer oder kurze historische Nachricht von den Verfolgungen der Mennoniten,* which was anonymously published five years later, in 1787, in Königsberg, Prussia.[37] It was the time when many Prussian Mennonites were preparing for emigration to Russia (1789). This book was successful, for it met a real need. Two more editions of it are known: a second one in 1863, published in Stuttgart, Germany, for Russian Mennonites and circulated in the Molotschna colony,[38] and a third one in 1939 published in Winnipeg, Canada, by those brethren who emigrated from Russia toward the end of the last century.[39] At first glance this book seems to be nothing but an epitome of Van Braght's famous *Martyrs' Mirror* of 1660, reducing the latter's 1500 pages to little more than 150. However, under closer scrutiny, it reveals distinct differences in purpose and make-up. Van Braght's book is comprehensive to the extent of completeness, comprising also a great number of non-Mennonite martyr stories, whereas van Dühren restricts himself deliberately to Mennonites, presenting to his brethren their own great past in convenient form. The book was written in 1782, that is two years after the publication of the first European German edition of the *Martyrs' Mirror* at Pirmasens, Palatinate, in 1780.[40] It is likely that the latter edition (published mostly in the interest of the Amish congregations of the Palatinate and surrounding territories) was then but little known in Eastern Germany. Thus, van Dühren, who translated his excerpts directly from the Dutch original, gave his brethren something completely new, just the right material for a flock ready for a large-scale emigration with unknown hardships ahead. More than this, the book has the great advantage of continuing the story of martyrdom beyond 1660, the year when van Braght's book was published. Van Dühren gives quite interesting details, for instance, about the persecution in Switzerland in 1660,

36 The *Mennonitische Blätter,* I, 1855, p. 4ff., published a letter of 1772 by Van Dühren to his uncle, which presents a striking picture of the emotional life of a devout pietistic Mennonite of the eighteenth century. It tells the story of Van Dühren's stirring conversion to Christ after a hard "Busskampf," and the following peace of mind.

37 Cf. *Menn. Lex.* I, 485; II, 91; III, 53. Goshen College Library has a copy of the first edition of 1787; a copy is also in Bethel College Library, bound with a short *Geschichte der Mennoniten* by one Dr. W. Crichton, Königsberg, Prussia, 1786.

38 This 1863 edition was printed by the same publishing company as the 1865 edition of the *Ausgewählte Schriften* by Peter Peters. Copies of this Van Dühren edition are in the libraries of Bethel and Tabor Collge.

39 Rundschau Publishing House. The title page says, "Erste kanadische Auflage."

40 This was a reprint of the Ephrata edition of 1748.

and the petition of the Dutch "Doopsgezinde" on behalf of their oppressed brethren. He also tells the story of the Hutterites up to 1784 (without mentioning their name), something hitherto completely unknown.[41] The same is true concerning the story of the persecution of the Mennonites in Prussia, chiefly by Roman Catholics, which van Dühren describes on the basis of his own investigations. Van Dühren used considerable source material not found in van Braght's book, although secondary sources only.[42]

The arrangement of van Dühren's material is peculiar: the first one hundred thirty pages tell the story of Mennonite martyrdom through persecution by the Roman Catholics (1524-1600), after van Braght.[43] Then follow four short pages dealing with the persecution by the Lutherans. Even this scant material is extremely carefully selected and treated, obviously with the intention to avoid anything which could arouse a bitter feeling among Lutheran fellow citizens. The remaining fifty pages relate the acts of intolerance by the Calvinists in Switzerland, Holland, and England. An interesting compilation of the main arguments of the champions of infant baptism, and how they can be answered, form the appendix. It is surprising that in 1782 a controversy was still alive which had shaken a great part of Europe two centuries and a half before but seemed to have died out.

The thirty-page preface to the book gives us the best insight into the mind of the author. He defends the Mennonites against the slander of being the descendants of the Münsterites. Following Jacob Mehrning (1646-1647), the most popular authority at that time on questions of the history of baptism, van Dühren derives Mennonitism from the mediaeval Waldensians, a theory which we have already met among Dutch Mennonite historians. In general, the keynote of the book is loyalty. "Keep your heritage! Be aware

41 We are in the happy situation to indicate the probable source of this section in van Dühren's book (Section No. 52). It was a report on the Hutterites which a Mennonite elder, Heinrich Donner, had published in Prussia in 1783 (*Menn. Lex.* I, 463). It proves the live interest of the oppressed Prussian Mennonites in the fate of the even more oppressed Hutterian Brethren.

42 Here is the interesting list: G. Arnold, *Kirchen- und Ketzerhistorie;* Jakob Mehrning, *Taufhistorie;* Herman Montanus, *Von der Nichtigkeit der Kindertaufe,* 1647 (Cf. *Menn. Lex.* III, 162); Sebastian Franck, *Chronik der römischen Ketzer;* J. H. Reitz, *Historie der Wiedergeborenen;* M. Gerber, *Historie der Wiedergeborenen;* P. Crocium, *Märtyrerbuch;* Hartknoch, *Preussiche Kirchengeschichte;* Hermann Schyn, *Geschiedenisse der Mennoniten.*

43 Yet with the same aberration, e. g., when Michael Sattler is called "a brother of the Waldensians" (p. 2).

of the deeds of your ancestors! Follow their faith! Be incited by love! Renounce the world!" This book did not aim to tell the world something about the Mennonites, but wanted to tell Mennonites something about the obligations deriving from their heritage. In this respect the book can still be of real value and its recent reprint of 1939 is certainly justified.

Van Dühren's book was also timely in its appearance. The situation in Prussia had become very oppressive and uncomfortable. A great part of the congregations therefore accepted the invitation of the Russian Empress Catherine II and emigrated in the years 1788, 1789, and following, to the Ukraine to enjoy religious freedom and to build up model autonomous communities. With them they took their precious books and their great tradition. These emigrants seem to have been the more active and stronger members of the church, while those who remained were the ones who were more inclined to efface the distinction between Mennonites and their Protestant neighbors. Consequently, there was little aggressive spirit left among those who stayed behind. They did not want to offend anyone by conduct or action. In short they became the *Stillen im Lande*. A very instructive example of this attitude may serve to conclude this short survey of the literary production of the Eastern German Mennonites. In 1834 a Mennonite brother of near Danzig, Peter van Riesen, spent much money and energy to have the complete works of Menno Simons translated into High German and printed. When the work was done, a non-Mennonite neighbor incidentally secured a copy of it and took offense at several sharp passages by Menno Simons against the Protestant theologians of his time. In all too great anxiety the elders of the Prussian Mennonite churches suppressed "by threat of the ban" the entire edition of several thousand copies, and ordered its storage in the attic of a near-by church building. Much later this edition was shipped to Russia where it became the standard edition of the brethren.[44]

[44] The above story is told by a Russian Mennonite, Peter Töws, in a small book published in Canada in 1911, entitled *Eine Seltsame Begebenheit* (cf. Bender, *op. cit.*, p. 135). Copies of the Riesen edition of Menno Simons works are in the Goshen and Tabor Colllege libraries.

THE ANABAPTIST NOVELETTES OF ADOLF STERN AND WILHELM HEINRICH RIEHL

Elizabeth Horsch Bender

Introduction

The volume of German literature dealing with Anabaptist and Mennonite themes is much larger than that of English or American literature. The problems created in church and state since the Reformation by this body of nonconformists are treated sympathetically by a number of German and Swiss writers of rank. Their treatment of the Anabaptist-Mennonite movement is on the whole more serious than that of American writers, inasmuch as the Europeans deal with ethical problems arising from Anabaptist doctrines and attitudes, whereas American writers tend to see only the quaint customs of the group in their deviation from the standard American patterns, such as costume and language.

Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl (1823-1897) and Adolf Stern (1835-1907) were outstanding writers of the German short story in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. Both wrote on subjects selected from German history; Stern emphasized matters of "local color," while Riehl was primarily interested in cultural history. From 1868 until his death Stern was Professor of Literature and the History of Art at Dresden. Riehl occupied the chair of History of Civilization at the University of Munich from 1859 to 1897. Each wrote one story based on an Anabaptist theme. These stories will be summarized and critically examined in the following discussion, with a view to determining their historical accuracy as well as the basic attitude of the authors to their material.

1. Adolf Stern's Novelle, *Die Wiedertäufer,* 1866

The scene of *Die Wiedertäufer*[1] is laid in the marshes of the lower Ems in Northwest Germany among the Anabaptist refugees from Münster; the time is about 1575, forty years after the fall of the Anabaptist kingdom of Münster.

At the opening of the story a procession of armed horsemen from Hamburg rides into the peaceful valley of the Ems in order to

[1] Adolf Stern, *Die Wiedertäufer* in *Historische Novellen,* Leipzig, 1866, pp. 189-296.

ferret out the Anabaptists who have established hidden settlements in the moors. The reason for the expedition is the fear in the cities of a second bloody revolution like that in Münster a generation earlier. At the head of the troop is Councilman Nicolaus Lorentzen, who pursues his task with a strange, relentless bitterness not shared by any of the men under his command. His nephew Friedrich, of whom he demands implicit obedience, finds the task distasteful and longs for freedom. While the others are resting, Friedrich rides out alone, and unexpectedly comes upon Hilla, a beautiful girl who starts in terror when she sees him, but can no longer flee for fear of betraying her haunts. He detains her, learns that she is one of the Anabaptists, and that she has come here to the roadside to be near the trees she loves; he permits her to escape back into the fens, promising not to observe the route she takes.

The party learns very little about the hiding places of the Anabaptists from the other inhabitants of the moors. Even the blind old "Heidebauer," who is staunchly Catholic, now regrets the curse with which he has in former days turned the Anabaptists from his door; he feels that in view of their forty years of privation and peaceful living the outside world has lost its right to hunt them down. Secretly he sends word to the Anabaptists concerning the danger. He apparently recognizes the leaders of this party and understands the reason for their bitterness, for he says,

"Und die heute hier waren hatten nie ein Recht!"[2]

Stern pictures very graphically and sympathetically the community life of these Anabaptists in their pitiful huts hidden among the buckwheat fields and fir trees. The only person among them who remembers the earlier days of violence is the aged Bernt Rothmann, the leader of the group. He alone knows the meaning of liberty, and understands the yearning of Hilla for a normal life and her refusal to marry Detlev. She is not unwilling to share the fate of her people, but she does not want to bring into the world a child who will likewise always have to flee from the sight of men.

Hilla and Detlev are captured and imprisoned in the barn of the "Heidebauer," to be burned on the following day after more of the Anabaptists can be found and added to the pyre. Friedrich manages to slip away from his party, releases the prisoners for the sake

[2] *Die Wiedertäufer*, p. 266.

of Hilla, and joins his fate to hers. Together they ride to the home of Bernt Rothmann to warn him and the other Anabaptists.

The Councilman is beside himself with rage and chagrin when he learns what has happened. Although it is night he compels his men to take up the pursuit over the dangerous marshes by torch light. One horseman after the other disappears in the bog, but the surviving members of the party finally come upon the settlement. The anger with which Lorentzen turns upon Friedrich and Hilla is boundless. In the midst of his outburst Bernt interrupts with the words,

"Der Scheiterhaufen? Ist das alles was du an Liebe für dein Enkelkind hast, Nicolaus Lorentzen?"[3]

The cause of Lorentzen's unreasoning hatred and fear of the Anabaptists becomes clear. In his youth he had left his home in Hamburg to play a leading role in the newly established kingdom at Münster, and had taken part in all the fanaticism and excesses of the Münsterites. At the fall of the city he had fled with Rothmann, but had then deserted his friends, including even his wife and child. He had been successful in keeping his part in the Münster affair a secret, but, pursued by his guilty conscience, he had now become their bitterest persecutor. He is shocked by the discovery of his former friend and of his own granddaughter. In returning Hilla to her family Rothmann feels that he has now fulfilled his last duty in life, and dies in peace. Stern makes the reader feel that Rothmann has fully atoned for his part in the Münster violence. Lorentzen permits his nephew and Hilla to proceed with his blessing, "neuem Leben und neuer Hoffnung entgegen."[4]

This novelette is included among the works on Münster discussed by Hugo Hermsen in *Die Wiedertäufer zu Münster in der deutschen Dichtung*.[5] Although he gives an excellent literary critique Hermsen fails to mention that Stern alone of the twenty authors—most of them dramatic—that he discusses, recognizes the fundamental difference between the Münsterites and the peaceful Anabaptists and that he has the refugees of the former return to the principles of the latter. Nor does he give any suggestion as to why Stern held so advanced a view of Anabaptist history at a time when research in this field was just beginning. Stern's attitude can be explained

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 285.
[4] *Ibid.*, p. 296.
[5] Stuttgart, 1913.

only on the supposition that he was familiar with the work of Cornelius,[6] the noted Munich church historian.

Lorentzen is a fictitious character, but Bernt Rothmann actually played an important role in Münster. It is, however, not historically accurate for Stern to have Bernt Rothmann return to his original peaceful Anabaptist life, for he had not been an Anabaptist before the days of the Münster kingdom. The historical Rothmann was originally the Catholic chaplain of St. Moritz, who represented the middle class citizens, more specifically the trade guilds, in their protests against the abuses of the Bishop's party, and with them became a follower of Luther. After the protesting elements in the city had finally gained control, they were further strengthened by the influx of Anabaptists, who found here a refuge from the unrelenting persecution that hounded them on all sides, and were easily converted to the radical program of Matthys. Rothmann was at first opposed to the Anabaptists, but, attracted by their social doctrines, he was eventually won over to their point of view and became very popular with them, although Matthys remained their leader until his death. In the general slaughter that followed the fall of the city, it is probable that Rothmann was killed,[7] though it is not certain.

Hermsen says that Stern was probably influenced to write the novellette by reading a reference in Hase's *Neue Propheten*[8] to the legend that Rothmann had escaped from Münster. Hase cannot, however, be considered Stern's only source, for in contrast to Stern's sympathetic picture, Hase's sketch of the Anabaptists is confused. He accepts all he has read about them with no attempt at harmonizing conflicting information, and favors the polemic writers, such as Bullinger. Thus he remarks, for instance, of the early Anabaptist movement:

[6] C. A. Cornelius, *Geschichte des Münsterischen Aufruhrs,* Leipzig 1860. He may also have used Max Goebel, *Geschichte des christlichen Lebens in der rheinischwestfälischen Kirche,* Bd. I, Bonn, 1849, which contains a remarkably objective and sympathetic section on the Anabaptists.

[7] "Die Mehrzahl der wehrhaften Männer des gestürtzten 'Reiches Israel' lag erschlagen auf dem Kampfplatz. Auch Bernhard Rothmann scheint den Tod . . . gefunden zu haben; seine Leiche ist zwar niemals entdeckt worden, allein die Vermuthung, dass er entkommen sei, ist ohne allen Anhalt." Ludwig Keller, *Geschichte der Wiedertäufer und ihres Reichs zu Münster,* Münster, 1880, p. 287.

[8] Karl Hase, *Neue Propheten, H. 3, Das Reich der Wiedertäufer,* Leipzig, 1851, p. 249f: "Ein Gerücht hat sich erhalten, er sei entkommen und habe noch lange Jahre still auf einem Edelhofe in Friesland gelebt. Urkundlich ist, dass auf Antrag des Stadtraths zu Münster 1537 in einigen Hansestädten auf ihn gefahndet wurde."

Gerade dadurch erschien diese Ketzerei zu gefährlich, weil ihr meisten Anhänger Heiligkeit ihres Wandels berufen konnten. . . ,[9]

but he gives equal weight to the old tales about their immoral excesses, and to statements like that of Luther's friend Spalatin, "Wo Gott eine Kirche hingebaut hat, setzt der Teufel eine Kapelle daneben."[10] Hase grants that the Anabaptists practiced community of goods

. . . nicht im kommunistischen Sinne der Gier und des Neides, sondern im Sinne . . . der brüderlichen Unterstützung, . . . [11]

Yet in the next sentence he repeats slanderous charges from the traditional sources.[12]

Concerning the episode at Münster, much as the Mennonites the world over repudiate any connection with it, it should probably be stated that many of the accusations against the leaders are only partial truths. In the bloody sixteenth century the Münster affair was actually no worse than other episodes. In many respects they simply adopted the current practices of their enemies, and justified them, as their enemies did, by Old Testament examples. The Münsterites beheaded or shot their victims; they were never guilty of torturing them or of burning them at the stake. The slaughter by the Bishop's army following the fall of the city was far more ruthless than the measures followed within the city, terrible though they were. The notorious Münsterite polygamy was probably introduced as a means of preserving their strict sex morals in the face of a declining male population. Their political success within the city, as well as their military success against the Bishop's army, was phenomenal. Their worst enemies granted that the discipline within the city was outstanding, even under the pressure of starvation.[13]

[9] Hase, p. 156.

[10] Hase, p. 148.

[11] Hase, p. 158.

[12] "In seiner Kirchengeschichte . . . finden nur die Münsterischen Verirrungen einen breiten Raum, während die stillen Täufer hier übergangen werden und auch die Ergebnisse der neueren Forschung keine Beachtung finden. Noch in der 1891 erschienenen Auflage wird behauptet: 'Es wird uns nirgends ein Gründer der Wiedertäufer genannt' (III. Teil, 1. Abt., S. 285), trotzdem Hase . . . auf das . . . 2. Buch von C. A. Cornelius, 'Geschichte des Münsterischen Aufruhrs' hinweist, das eine quellenmässige Darstellung der Züricher Täufergemeinde im Jahre 1525 gibt." Hege, *Menn. Lex.* vol. II, p. 262.

[13] Among the historians who take this more tolerant attitude toward the Münster affair, though none of them condones the atrocities committed within the city, are C. A. Cornelius, Ludwig Keller, Hugo Hermsen, C. Henry Smith, and John Horsch. All of these place the responsibility for the misdeeds of the Münsterite Anabaptists chiefly on Jan van Leyden.

Concerning the literary merits of Stern's novelle Hermsen concludes:

> Das Schicksal dieser einsamen Menschen führt der Dichter in einer lebendigen Handlung vor. Sie ist dem Leben der verstossenen Wiedertäufer eng verbunden, das vom Dichter besonders anschaulich und stimmungsvoll dargestellt ist. Dem gelehrten Literarhistoriker ist es gelungen, die Seelenschilderung mit dem geschichtlichen Hintergrund innerlich zu verweben.[14]

2. Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's Novelle, *Mein Recht,* 1875[15]

The action of Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl's novelette *Men Recht* takes place in the region of Radesloe near Reinbeck in the southern Palatinate, Southwestern Germany, in the year 1577.

On a hot afternoon in July five weary and bored men are sitting together soberly drinking in an inn. Four of them are well-to-do peasants; the three Gülzow brothers, Hennecke, Klaus, and Joachim; and their neighbor and friend, Peter Graumann. The fifth member of the party is a minstrel. In a scuffle involving the minstrel, Peter draws his knife, and Joachim in trying to kick it out of his hand cuts a deep gash in his own leg. During his convalescence Joachim plans a bloody revenge; but Hennecke, a very deliberate and thoughtful man, persuades him to drop the matter. However, when Joachim suddenly relapses with an infection in the wound, he freely forgives Peter, whereas Hennecke, who has always been industrious and businesslike, begins to neglect his work and brood at night.

After Joachim's burial Klaus immediately wants to demand his brother's blood of Peter, but Hennecke refuses to become a murderer, preferring to let the courts give them justice. While they are talking, an old man approaches with a delicate girl of twelve, both scarcely able to walk for weariness. He asks the brothers for a few days' shelter, promising to help with the harvest in return.

During the course of the trial at Reinbeck Hennecke returns to his normal habits. He tries to talk to Mathias, the old man, about the lawsuit which completely occupies his mind. Hennecke considers Peter as good as convicted, for four witnesses have testified against him. Mathias remains uninterested. Hennecke insists, "What do you think of four oaths?"

[14] Hermsen, p. 149.

[15] In W. H. Riehl, *Am Feierabend, Sechs Neue Novellen,* Stuttgart und Berlin, 1923, pp. 175-223.

Mathias answers calmly, "I say that four oaths are four sins, for it is written: Swear not at all; let your communication be yea, yea; nay, nay."

Hennecke demands: "Do you consider it a sin to obtain right legally?"

"I consider it unchristian to sue my brother at law."

"Then you Swiss consider it more Christian to avenge the death of a brother by . . . force?"

Quickly Mathias replies, "The use of force . . . is less Christian than a lawsuit and an oath."

Hennecke is dumbfounded. After a long pause he says, "Evidently nobody has ever done you an injustice, to say nothing of having the death of a brother burning in your soul."

Thereupon Mathias answers, "Believe me, I should have the death of not *one* brother, but of many hundred brothers to avenge; but it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord: . . ." and shows him many deep scars produced by instruments of torture. He adds softly to Hennecke, so that the child Martha shall not hear, "For this child I should have a father to avenge, who was my brother. The child knows who is responsible for her father's death. She mourns, . . . but in her innocence she knows nothing of vengeance. We should all become as little children."

The next day Hennecke hears the shocking news that Peter has been acquitted. He goes to Reinbeck, finds that the judge is out hunting, and that his place is occupied by a woman. Hennecke's faith in the local court is shattered by this desecration of its dignity.

Mathias and his daughter leave without Hennecke's learning their history. The people of the village think them criminals, but the pastor supposes that they are Anabaptists. How cruelly—thinks he—these poor people, who have long since abandoned the violence of the Münsterite ancestors, are persecuted![16] He keeps his suspicion to himself in order not to injure them further.

Hennecke practices marksmanship throughout the months of autumn. Then he announces to Peter the opening of the feud. In January he and Klaus kill Peter Graumann. Most of the peasants agree that since the law has not avenged Joachim, the brothers have had to do it, but the Graumanns carry the case to the highest court, in Speyer, and charge Hennecke with breach of the public peace.

[16] Riehl is wrong in considering the Münsterites the ancestors of the Swiss Anabaptists.

The latter is as proud of his "case" as if he were the accuser instead of the defendant. He has his heart so firmly set on obtaining justice that he could not even have died without first hearing that he had obtained his rights. He works hard and saves cheerfully to defray the continued heavy expense of the lawsuit. Klaus marries, but Hennecke is already "married to his lawsuit." Eleven years pass during which Hennecke converses with Peter's ghost at night, especially when news concerning the trial is due. Even a ghost can not rest with so important a case in progress.

When one day Martha returns to work for the Gülzows, Hennecke recognizes her at once. Her presence seems to have banished the ghost, for he no longer hears Peter's voice at midnight. He scarcely speaks to her, since he does not dare to speak to her of his only subject of conversation, namely the trial, because it has begun with murder. Finally he manages to ask her how she lost her father. She tells him hesitatingly, "Through the executioners," and relates the story.

Martha's father and uncle had come from Moravia and settled as weavers in Morgenholzen on the upper Rhine, where they had quietly joined the Anabaptists. After some years they were taken to the castle and tortured in the child's presence; the father was beheaded, whereas uncle and child escaped. The father forgave the executioner and judges, as all the Swiss Brethren did; although they were powerful enough in numbers to have avenged themselves, if they had wanted to do so.

Upon hearing the story, Hennecke remarks that if they really had been powerful enough they would surely have had revenge, and atoned for blood with blood. An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. That is what the Bible says. But the maid replies that that verse is in the Old Testament. The New Testament says, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."[17]

After three months Hennecke announces to Klaus that he is going to marry Martha. Hennecke does not understand her spirit of conciliation, nor does he care to imitate it—in Mathias it had irritated him, but in Martha he admires it. He calls her to his room, bolts the door, seats himself, and declares his intentions to the

[17] The historical position of the Swiss Brethren is correctly given here. They taught that one should take the rules for faith as well as conduct not from the Old Testament, but from the New. Calvin: "Das entsetzliche Dogma der Täufer: Abgetan ist das Alte Testament!" (Neff, "Calvin," *Menn. Lex.*, vol. I, p. 316. Neff quotes from a letter of Calvin's dated Jan. 21, 1546.)

frightened girl standing before him. When she finally understands, she confesses to him the terrible truth: she is an Anabaptist. Hennecke knows that the Anabaptists baptize their children twice:[18] once soon after birth, and then again when they are old enough to enjoy the celebration following the ceremony. That is a terrible thought. "Derselbe Schlüssel, welcher, einmal umgedreht, den Himmel öffnet, schien ihm, zweimal umgedreht, noch viel sicherer die Hölle aufzuschliessen."[19] But is soon appears that she has not really been baptized the second time, because there had been no time for that before her father's death. Hennecke is very happy at this simple solution, and has her tell about the rest of their teachings. She answers simply:

> "Man lehrte mich, Gott zu lieben über alles, und meinen Nächsten wie mich selbst, keine Rache zu nehmen für erlittenes Unrecht, keinen Streit zu führen, sondern vielmehr zu segnen, die mich fluchen, keinen Eid zu schwören, fleissig zu arbeiten und zu beten und in froher Hoffnung den jüngsten Tag zu erwarten, der bald kommen wird."[20]

She explains that her uncle was not one of the strict sect who wear hooks and eyes, and that he did not make her dress too oddly.

Having made her confession she demands of Hennecke that he abandon his lawsuit; otherwise she can never be his wife. She gives him three days to think it over. Hennecke hardly knows how this has come about: a penniless maid to give him, the most eligible man in the village, three days to consider. He can not acknowledge that he has wronged Peter, and so they part. Martha leaves.

That night Klaus hears Hennecke talking with Peter again. In the morning he sees Hennecke solemnly seated at the table; on the table is the Bible cut apart to separate the two Testaments. He imagines that he is the judge at the court of Speyer, trying to reconcile the large book with the smaller. One says, "An eye for an eye"; the other, "Vengeance is mine, . . . saith the Lord." The small book (the New Testament) will break Hennecke's neck, if it wins the case against the large one (the Old Testament). Finally he calls the entire household to his room and pronounces judgment. The small book has won the case, for the verse "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," originally was in the large one.[21] Hennecke Gülzow is thereby

[18] An error.

[19] *Am Feierabend,* p. 216.

[20] *Ibid.,* p. 217.

[21] Deuteronomy 32:35, "Die Rache ist mein; ich will vergelten." Romans 12:19, "Rächet euch selber nicht, meine Liebsten, soudern gebet Raum dem Zorn; denn es

pronounced guilty of the murder of Peter Graumann, and condemned to death.

In this novelette Wilhelm Riehl has selected the theme of non-vengeance ("Rachelosigkeit") from Anabaptist teaching and given it serious treatment as an ethical problem. He carefully eliminates other questions, such as baptism, by avoiding the real issue, so that Martha represents only the principle of non-retaliation, or more positively, returning good for evil. The conflict is clearly presented, and the tragic end follows convincingly from the elements of the story: The conflict of Hennecke's natural and civil right to revenge with the New Testament position represented by Martha is irreconcilable, and leads to madness and death for Hennecke. Riehl points out that the biblicistic Anabaptist position is more practical than that of other Christian bodies, which is derived from folkways and non-Christian tradition. Riehl frequently deplored the tendency of the courts to prey on the people by encouraging them to bring suit and then permitting the cases to drag out interminably. He urged the peasants to settle their differences amicably outside the courts.

In der Novelle Mein Recht geht es um das Problem der Rachelosigkeit im speziellen Verstande. Die Idee der Rachelosigkeit siegt. Aber der Dichter lässt zugleich die ganze Last des Problems fühlen für die geschichtliche Lage, der es gestellt war, und für de ganze arge Welt. Es kann einer darüber zum Narren werden. Klar kommen die verschiedenen Quellen zum Vorschein, aus denen sich der sittliche Bestand des Täufertums und des Nichttäufertums damals bebildet hat; das Täufertum lebt aus der Bibel, das Nichttäufertum bildet sich seine sittlichen Massstäbe trotz seiner Kirchlichkeit aus dem Volkstum. Riehl hat keinen Zweifel bestehen lassen, dass das Volkstum die Bibel braucht.[22]

Riehl, the "Kulturhistoriker," has interpreted the Anabaptist principles so well and sympathetically, that one hesitates to criticize the few historical errors. They can be mentioned briefly. On the point of baptism, if Hennecke was so horrified to think that Martha had been baptized twice, he would probably have been doubly horrified, if he had known that she had not been baptized at all. For the Mennonites do not baptize their infants; nor do they have a feast to celebrate the baptism when it does take place. Riehl also places the the Amish division more than a century too early. The old erro-

steht geschrieben: Die Rache ist mein; ich will vergelten, spricht der Herr." In the Authorized English Version the citations from the Old and New Testaments are not in identical translation. The difference in the ethical setting of the two quotations is obvious.

[22] *Menn. Lex.*, p. 684.

neous idea that all the Anabaptists were descendants of the Münsterites can be expected to appear in anything written in the past century, and it does in *Mein Recht,* as the opinion of the pastor of Radesloe. It does not, of course, follow that Riehl also held this view; it is, in fact, very likely that he shared the view of C. A. Cornelius, since they both held professorships at Munich in related fields.[23]

A brief mention of Mennonites is found in two other books by Riehl. His *Wanderbuch*[24] contains a chapter on the subject "Crefeld und Cornelius de Greiff," describing the contributions of the Mennonite de Greiff family to the Crefeld community. The chapter opens with an account of the city's prosperity, which Riehl says was brought about by the early toleration of the separatist groups, among them the Mennonites. The same idea is found in Riehl's *Die Pfälzer, Ein Rheinisches Volksbild,*[25] as may be seen from the following paragraph taken from that book:

[23] Riehl was Professor of the History of Civilization and Statistics (1859-1897) and Cornelius was Professor of History (1856-1889). An article by Cornelius, "Die Eroberung der Stadt Münster im Jahre 1533. Eine Untersuchung," appeared in *Historisches Taschenbuch.* Begründet von Raumer. Herausgegeben von W. H. Riehl. Fünfte Folge. Zweiter Jahrgang, Leipzig, 1872.

[24] "Am Osterwall zu Crefeld erhebt sich eine hohe Säule zum Gedächtnis des berühmtesten Crefelder Bürgers neuerer Zeit, des Cornelius de Greiff (1781-1863) der durch seine grossartigen Stiftungen einen seltenen bürgerlichen Gemeinsinn bewährt hat. Die Säule . . . ist . . . modern elegant . . . Und doch findet man ein noch bezeichnenderes Denkmal . . . . In Form einer recht dilettantisch gezeichneten Lithographie hängt es da und dort in den Häusern unter Glas und Rahmen . . . . Wir sehen den untersetzen Mann mit scharf geschnittenem Profil, eine feste, echte bürgerliche, wenn man will, spiessbürgerliche Gestalt. . . . Das ist Herr de Greiff, wie er leibte und lebte, sagen die Crefelder. . . . Hinter ihm aber erhebt sich eine Pyramide in ganz neuem Stil, aus unten grossen, oben immer kleineren viereckigen Kasten aufgebaut, und auf denselben stehen seine sämmtlichen Stiftungen zu Gemeindezwecken derart verzeichnet, dass der unterste Kasten mit der breiten Grundlage eines Vermächtnisses von 100,000 Thalern anhebt, dann verjüngen sich die Kasten höher und immer höher, bis die Spitze mit einer kleinen Schatulle von 1000 Thalern abschliesst. Dies kindlich kunstlose Gedenkblatt rührte mich mehr, als die polierte Steinsäule auf dem Osterwall mit dem feingebildeten Erzkapitäl . . . . Dieser Bürger möchte ein echter Typus für den historischen Gesammtcharacter der ganzen Stadt sein." Quoted from *Menn. Bl.,* Vol. XXXV (Nov. 1, 1888), p. 124f. Riehl's *Wanderbuch* was not accessible to me.

[25] W. H. Riehl, *Die Pfälzer. Ein rheinisches Volksbild.* Dritte Auflage, Stuttgart und Berlin, 1907, p. 288f. See also "Wilhelm Heinrich Riehl. Zu seinem 100sten Geburtstage," in *Christlicher Gemeinde-Kalendar,* vol. XXXII (1923), pp. 65-68, where the following explanation is given: "1854 hat König Max II. Riehl den Auftrag gegeben, eine ethnographische Characteristik der Rheinpfalz zu schaffen, . . . sodass Riehl das Land während dreier Jahre ausgiebig bereisen konnte. Als Frucht dieser Studien erschien 1857 *Die Pfälzer. Ein rheinisches Volksbild*". The author of this article, who signs himself as K., speaks very admiringly of Riehl. As a student he had attended Riehl's lectures on cultural history at the University of Munich in 1896 ,and was deeply impressed by his scholarship and personality. He advises the Mennonite young people to read Riehl's works, and recommends particularly his *Religiöse Studien eines Weltkindes.*

Neben den beiden Hauptbekenntnissen sind auch die Mennoniten über das ganze Land ausgestreut und hier in grösserer Zahl sesshaft . . . . Das ist ein gutes Zeichen der wachsenden landwirtschaftlichen Bedeutung der Pfalz, denn wo der Pflug durch goldene Auen geht, da schlägt auch der Mennonit sein Bethaus auf . . . . Unter den studierten Predigern der Mennoniten am Rhein gibt es übrigens Männer, vor deren wissenschaftlicher und humaner Bildung das Licht manches katholischen und protestantischen Pfarrers so dunkel werden mag wie eine Westricher Strassenlaterne. Seit alten Zeiten fanden die Mennoniten in der Pfalz grössere Duldung als anderswo und schon in früheren Jahrhunderten teilten hier die Protestanten ihren Kirchhof mit den Männern dieser friedlichen Sekte.[26]

I have not been able to find how Riehl came to write *Mein Recht* on an Anabaptist theme. However a few facts are known which throw some light on the question. In the first place, both the home of his parents, Biebrich, and that of his grandfather,[27] at the foot of the Donnersberg, lie in the midst of or near to old, well-established Mennonite settlements; hence Riehl was doubtless in frequent personal contact with Mennonites. Again, his association with C. A. Cornelius probably had some bearing on his choice of the Anabaptist theme. Besides this, his interest in all minority groups should not be overlooked as a factor in the choice. But most important is no doubt his interest in practical—as opposed to dogmatic—Christianity of the type practiced by the Medieval Brethren of the Common Life.[28] This interest in "applied" religion drew his attention to the free churches, such as the Quakers and the Mennonites.

[26] The assertion that the Protestants had shared their cemeteries with the Mennonites is true to fact only in part.

[27] Bernhard J. Chr. Schmidt, *W. H. Riehl. Seine geistige Entwicklung bis zur Übernahme seiner Professur in München.* Dissert. Strassburg, 1913, pp. 5-9. Schmidt also states that Riehl cast his grandfather in the role of a Mennonite in the novel *Richard Zürbach* (1846) ; I have not been able to find a copy of this book.

[28] See Robert Müller-Sternberg, "W. H. Riehls Volkslehre," *Form und Geist,* vol. 41, 1939.

EXTINCT OHIO MENNONITE CHURCHES

III. Seneca County

John Umble

The Seneca County settlement of Mennonites founded near the the beginning of the fourth decade of the nineteenth century belongs to that line of German settlements extending across the northern part of the state of Ohio. For some reason a number of the Mennonite settlements were about fifty miles apart. The Columbiana and Mahoning County settlement was approximately fifty miles from the Harmony Mennonite settlement in Butler County, Pennsylvania. The next Mennonite settlement was fifty miles west of Mahoning in Stark County in the vicinity of Canton. A number of settlements lay within the next fifty mile radius reaching to Chester Township near the western boundary of Wayne County. These included small settlements in western Tuscarawas, northwestern Holmes, southeastern Wayne and southern Medina.

The next Mennonite settlement to the west, in western Ashland County (formerly part of Richland County), was only about thirty miles from the settlement in Chester Township, Wayne County. Another fifty-mile drive to the west reached the Mennonite settlement in north central Crawford and southwestern Seneca. From here again, continuing northwestward, it was about fifty miles to the Mennonite settlement in Wood County. From Wood County in their travels westward by horseback and wagon Mennonites could go southwest fifty miles more to the Mennonite settlement in Putnam and Allen Counties, or continue in a northwesterly direction across the fords of the Maumee River seventy-five miles to Williams County, the last Mennonite settlement in western Ohio.

Williams County lay about one hundred miles northwest of the Mennonite settlement in Putnam and Allen. In the early years, if the journey was to continue to Elkhart, Indiana, from Williams County, the route crossed the Michigan line and followed the line of older settlements through Hillsdale, Coldwater, and White Pigeon to avoid the bogs, lakes, and swamps of northeastern Indiana.[1]

[1] When in 1848 Preacher John Thut and his wife, the former Christiana Bechtel, started from Holmes County, Ohio, for Elkhart County, Indiana, they intended to follow this route stopping at Mennonite settlements on the way. When they arrived in

Seneca County, like Wood, was situated in the section known as the Black Swamp in northwestern Ohio. Health conditions were very little better here than in some of the surrounding counties. Because parts of Seneca County were more rolling, drainage was probably better than in some other sections. In 1834, however, a cholera epidemic broke out in Seneca County. Tiffin, the county seat, was deserted. Eighty-six coffins were manufactured and sold in five weeks by one firm. One Sunday there were sixteen corpses on the Ft. Ball side of Tiffin. The epidemic returned in a somewhat milder form in 1849, 1852, and 1854.

The country was so heavily timbered that the trees were actually a source of annoyance and economic distress. The settlers were forced to cut down and burn the trees before they could raise crops. A contract for the clearing of part of a certain farm near Galion in Crawford County, illustrates how clearing was done and the importance that was attached to the sowing of clover. Jacob Gearhart rented an eighty-acre farm for three years. Beginning on September 1, 1855, the rental to be paid was $25.00 a year and three acres of land to be cleared each year. The clearing was to be done in certain designated areas and the renter agreed to do the clearing in such a way that a clearing would make a square field. In clearing he was to cut down all the timber except the oak, and to make rails and run a lane from the barn to the county road. He was also to bridge the land in several wet places, that is, he was to build a "corduroy" road by laying the logs on the ground. Finally he was to sow four acres of clover the last year and leave ten acres in old clover or fallow ground. He was to take good care of the orchard trees and to leave the fences in good repair when his time was up.

The writer had heard of a Mennonite settlement in Crawford and Seneca Counties, but inquiry had failed to reveal where this settlement was located.[2] In August, 1930, he decided to attempt to locate it by investigating the courthouse records. At Tiffin, the county seat, he spent long hours examining the deed index of Seneca County for the early years and noted the location of the land pur-

Allen County, Ohio, however, friends whom John Thut had known iin Switzerland persuaded him and his wife to remain in the Swiss colony near Bluffton, Ohio. See "Zion (Bluffton) Congregation" in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review,* V (July, 1931), p. 155 ff.

[2] Search for the Seneca County settlement led to the accidental discovery of the now entirely forgotten Mennonite settlement in western Richland County and eastern Crawford near Galion. For the sake of completeness a brief account of the latter will be presented in a later article.

chases of early settlers whose names indicated that they might be Mennonites.

Joseph Hoover, Jacob Hursh, and Adam Crissman, purchased land from the United States Government in Pleasant Township northeast of Tiffin, the county seat, in 1829, 1831, and 1833, respectively. A certain Conrad Roth, of Bucyrus, Crawford County, Ohio, had purchased land in Venice Township in the extreme southeastern part of Seneca County on January 4, 1827. The following had made purchases from the United States Government in Big Springs Township in the extreme southwestern part of the county: Jonathan Foltz, John Fry in 1832; John Boucher, David Smoker, of Wayne County, Ohio; Henry Schumaker, John Springer, Sr., John Springer, Jr., Peter Lance in 1834; Jacob Miller, David Grabeal, also spelled Krabill, Jacob Boucher, Isidore Frey, Joseph Martin, John Meyer, Henry Hoffman, Ephraim Bare, J. F. Shoemaker, Thomas W. Greer in 1835. These names, however, indicated an Amish rather than a Mennonite settlement, or it might be Dunkard.

The following list of early purchasers in Bloom Township looked somewhat more promising. Noah Musselman, 1826; Henry Glick, 1830; Jacob Ebersole, 1832; Jacob Myer, 1831 and 1833; Jacob Geiger, Jacob Troxel, Jacob Myers, and Jacob Schmid, in 1834; and Jacob V. Funk in 1836. But there were also the following names of purchasers of land in Eden Township, adjoining Bloom Township on the west: John Kagey, Henry Beery; Benjamin Brundage, of New York state; Samuel Knopp, and John Neisz, in 1822; Henry Glick in 1826; John Kagey, in 1825 and Henry Beery, in 1829. There were such names also as Shull, Scherch, Shoup, Staulter, many Stoners and Daniel Stuckey.

What finally turned the scale in favor of Bloom Township was the discovery in the county records of a deed dated January 25, 1842, conveying a plot of ground sixteen rods long, north and south, and ten rods wide, east and west, in Section Thirteen of Bloom Township "to Henry Troxel, Jacob Rothgape and Isaac Boren [Rohrer] and the Manominest (sic) Congregation of Bloom Township." The clerk in writing and copying the deed had evidently spelled Rohrer's name phonetically "Rorer" but on the records it looked like "boren." None of these names were known to the writer as Mennonite names at the time nor was the name of the person conveying the property to the trustees, for the deed was signed by

George Muckle. But the name "Manominest" (Menno Menist?) seemed sufficiently specific to warrent investigation.[3]

Finally the writer set out for Bloomville to locate Section Thirteen in Bloom Township. North of Bloomville he found an old deserted church building and adjacent to it what appeared to be a very old cemetery. Investigation revealed such names as Shanower, Fisher, Richard, Heikes, King, Witmyer, Rohrer, Diller, Shupe, Roop, Kauffman, Ebersole, Bowman. But there were also others such as Feightner, Hull, Fangamnon, McNamara, Palmater, Cole, Brossa, Deving, and Norton.[4]

In the village of Bloomville the writer found a number of older residents who knew of a church erected nearly one hundred years ago in Section Thirteen in Bloom Township, southeast of Bloomville. The name "Mennonite" was entirely unfamiliar to them. They remembered the group who had worshipped at the place as "the Meneese," evidently a corruption of the German for Mennonite, "Menist," (pronounced *may-neesht* with the accent on the last syllable).

In Seneca County, as in most Ohio Mennonite communities, the Mennonites were not the first settlers. The group which settled in Eden Township during the twenties seems to have been made up largely of members of the Church of the Brethren (the Dunkers, or German Baptist Brethren) who had driven across the wilderness from Fairfield County about one hundred miles southeast.[5] A certain Abraham Kagey and John Ruch drove oxen from Fairfield to Bloom Township before the earliest Mennonite settlers arrived. Abraham Kagey found an inhabited Indian hut on the farm which he had bought. The Indians remained on the land five or six years after his arrival. This Kagey married a daughter of "old John A. Ruch." There were only three houses in the county seat, Tiffin, when

[3] The writer has never seen a satisfactory explanation of the different names applied to Mennonites on the frontier. The name Menist is common but about 1834 Preacher John Risser, a recent German immigrant, refers to his own group in Ashland County as "die Mennoniten," and speaks of the other group as "die hiesigen Menisten" (the local Menists).

[4] This turned out to be a Dunkard cemetery. The Brethren in this community, like the Mennonites, have disappeared entirely.

[5] The Fairfield County settlement was now (in the early twenties) nearly twenty-five years old and, as in most frontier settlements, the growing population, due to immigration and natural increase, was then creating a land hunger easily satisfied by moving some hundred miles westward. See the writer's article, "The Fairfield County, Ohio, Background of the Allen County, Ohio, Mennonite Settlement, 1799-1860," in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review*, VI (January 1932), 5-29, especially pp. 18-20.

they moved to the county. The Kagey's buried their dead at the "old School" Baptist Church southwest of Bloomville.

In the Baptist cemetery adjacent to this church is the grave of John A. Ruch, who died in 1872 at the age of 63 and his wife, Hannah, who died in 1879, aged 65. Hannah, the wife of Rudolph Kagey, died November 15, 1870, at the age of 90. Other burials in the cemetery are Nissley, Seitz, Martin, Hershberger, Bretz, Spitler, Mary, wife of John Frey, who died in 1874, aged 81, and Anna, wife of Abraham Kagey, who died in 1874 at the age of 58. Two rows of tombstones extending entirely across the cemetery mark the graves of the Huddle families.

A few Mennonites began to arrive during the twenties. Tradition says that the Troxels[6] came from Stark County. This is borne out also by some of the deed records.

The Mennonite church built in 1842 or earlier was located on the road running along the south side of Section Thirteen in Bloom Township about two and one-half miles southeast of Bloomville. Jacob Troxel, of Stark County, purchased the north half of this section from the United States Government on September 30, 1834. He purchased another quarter section four miles southwest in 1837. A month earlier he had sold half of his first purchase to John Troxel. Another family of Troxels, of Frederick County, Maryland, purchased land in Seneca County, southwest of Tiffin, in 1832, 1833, and 1835. Frederick Troxel was living in Seneca County on July 25, 1836. On May 25, 1836, George Muckle (pronounced Mook-li) bought from his father-in-law, Jacob Troxel, and his wife, Elizabeth, who were still living in Stark County at that time, the southwest quarter of Section Thirteen where the church later was located.

Jacob Troxel still resided in Stark County the next spring (1837) when he sold the northeast quarter of Section Thirteen in Bloom Township, Seneca County, to John Troxel, and seems not to have moved to Seneca County until the following summer, when, in June, 1837, he purchased a tract southwest of Bloomville.

At least two Jacob Troxel families were members of the Seneca County Mennonite congregations. Jacob and Elizabeth Troxel moved to Seneca County from Stark County, Ohio, after most, pos-

[6] This seems to be an anglicized, near-phonetic spelling of the German name, Trachsel. In the Mennonite cemetery in Seneca County at least one tombstone spells the name Traxel. Edward Yoder recently called the writer's attention to a booklet entitled "Biographical Sketch of Abraham Drachsel and a List of His Descendants."

sibly all, of their children were married. At the time of his death Jacob Troxel owned three quarters of Section Thirteen.

Other families which moved in during the next decade, 1840-1850, included Isaac Rohrer,[7] a son-in-law of Jacob Troxel and a brother-in-law of George Muckle, the Rothgebs (also spelled Rodegabe), and the Legrons, also spelled Lechrone or Legrone and sometimes pronounced with the accent on the last syllable, sometimes on the first. In the vicinity of Bloomville one sometimes hears the name pronounced very much like "Leghorn" with the last syllable very short. Jacob Detweiler came in 1844.[8] The Lehmans (Nicholas Lehman) were already in Seneca County in 1843.

A number of early settlers were sons and sons-in-law of Jacob and Elizabeth Troxel. Two of the sons were David and Joseph. David Knopp, also spelled Knupp. married Troxel's daughter, Susan. Isaac Rohrer's first wife was Elizabeth, another daughter. George Muckley (or Muckle), a native of Germany, married Magdalene, a third daughter. After the death of Isaac Rohrer's first wife, he married his wife's sister, Magdalene, widow of George Muckley. The latter at the age of thirteen came to America with his parents, Michael and Barbara Muckley, who settled in Stark County, Ohio. There he married Magdalene Troxel on April 18, 1833, and moved on a farm. On May 25, 1836, he purchased in Bloom Township the southwest quarter of Section Thirteen where the Mennonite cemetery is located. He paid Jacob Troxel, probably his father-in-law, two hundred dollars for the

[7]Isaac Rohrer (October 16, 1814-July 5, 1896), of Seneca County, was a great-grandson of John Rohrer, who emigrated to America from Europe in 1732. Isaac, a son of John Rohrer, married Elizabeth Groff and lived in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Their youngest son, Abraham, was born there on December 28, 1788. The latter married Margaret Board, moved to Washington County, Maryland, and lived there twenty years before moving to Medina County, Ohio, in covered wagons in 1833, the same years that saw the first meetinghouse in the eight-year-old Mennonite settlement. Abraham soon was ordained minister and later bishop, being the first resident bishop.

Bishop Abraham (1788-1878) and Margaret (Board) Rohrer were the parents of eleven children, whose average age at death was over eighty-six. Two were ministers: the eldest, Michael (1812-1895) in Medina County, the grandfather of Preacher S. D. Rohrer; and Isaac, the third child, the Seneca County minister. One son, Abraham (1825-1915), was a deacon in Medina County. The eldest daughter, Mary (1813-1899), married Peter Newcomer and became the mother of Deacon Henry Newcomer, of Medina County.

Bishop Michael Rohrer (1817-1892), of Canton, Ohio, was a cousin, and not the brother, of Preacher Isaac Rohrer, of Seneca County.

[8] George Detweiler, a grandson of Jacob Detweiler, was living in Bloomville in 1942 and gave the writer valuable assistance in gathering material for this article. His wife was a daughter of Conrad and Anna (Hunsicker) Briner. This George Detweiler, now spelled Detwiler, passed away very suddenly in January, 1943. His daughter, Bernice, is teaching in the Columbian High School in Tiffin.

tract. He died in 1842 shortly after he and his wife had deeded an acre of land to the congregation for a burying ground and for a meetinghouse. They were the parents of five children.[9] Elizabeth Troxel, wife of Isaac Rohrer, died on January 23, 1852, and left her husband with eight children. Then, on February 26, 1853, Preacher Isaac Rohrer married his deceased wife's widowed sister, Magdalene (Troxel) Muckley, as already mentioned.

A prominent family in the Mennonite community was that of Jacob Detweiler. Jacob and Elizabeth Detweiler were natives of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, and settled in Bloom Township in 1840. On August 15 of that year they purchased for $400.00 forty acres on the north side of the diagonal road running southeast from Bloomville. Jacob died in 1850 and his wife Elizabeth in 1860. Both are buried in the Mennonite cemetery southeast of Bloomville. Within recent years their gravestones were carefully reset on a firm concrete base by their grandson, George Detwiler. Their son Jacob married Elizabeth Muckley, one of the daughters of George and Magdalene (Troxel) Muckley, April 20, 1856. Both of them united with the Mennonite Church in their youth and Jacob Detwiler remained a member of the Church until his death, November 14, 1902, but his wife united with the Reformed Church in Bloomville about 1880. They are buried in Woodlawn cemetery west of Bloomville.

Several Hunsicker families were among the early Mennonite settlers in Seneca County. Michael Z. and his wife Hannah (Clemens) Hunsicker, natives of Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, were married on May 10, 1818, moved to Columbiana County, Ohio, in 1838, and removed to Seneca County in 1843. After the Civil War (1865) they finally located near Berlin (now Kitchener), Ontario, where both died and were buried in Eby's cemetery, as the Mennonite cemetery was then called. Hannah Clemens, the wife of Michael Z. Hunsicker, was born September 11, 1801, and died in Kitchener on October 11, 1877. Michael Hunsicker was a weaver.

(To be concluded)

[9] The children of George and Magdalena (Troxel) Muckley were: Elizabeth, wife of Jacob Detweiler; Catherine, died in her twenty-first year (unmarried); Michael, living in Kosciusko County, Indiana, about 1886; Susan, born 1840, married John Newcomer October 25, 1860, died November 17,1903; and Hannah, widow (in 1886) of George Hahn, in Bloomville. John Newcomer, husband of Susan Muckley, was the son of Peter and Mary (Rohrer) Newcomer (see footnote 7) and was born in Medina County, Ohio, March 3, 1836. Peter Newcomer was born in Washington County, Maryland, and moved to Medina County in 1833, moving a second time in 1861 to Seneca County. Both Peter and John seem to have moved back to Medina County.